

THE LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

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[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

No. 261.—VOL. XI.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING MAY 9, 1868.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[MAT RIGBY BETRAYS HIMSELF.]

ELLEN LAMBERT'S TWENTY YEARS.

BY M. T. CALDOR.

CHAPTER III.

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

Shakespeare.

KENT FORSAY, young and strong, needed no opiate to induce sleep, after the smart of his burns had ceased away, and he only awoke when the cheery morning sunshine, stealing through the crimson draperies of the windows, touched his eyelids with its silent but potent summons. He was instantaneously conscious of the circumstances of his position, and turning his head so as to look around the whole room, he examined with keen curiosity one article after another. Each was solid, richly carved, and of a fashion now quaint and odd, twenty years old at least, but to one of Kent Forsay's artistic and somewhat romantic tastes, the effect was far more pleasing than any modern decorations, however costly and elegant.

"But it is all so strange, so very strange," he murmured. "It really seems like the intervention of Providence that I should have been at hand, opposite this silent old mansion, at that one moment of time required to bring me into this position. And the nameless fascination which drew me towards it, how shall I explain it? I remember Legard, my old chum at college, how he insisted that we are acted upon by invisible influences. It is startling to think that it may be possible my uncle, in that other state of transition, sees his injustice to me, and has impressed me to remain in this town, as I was certainly impelled to do yesterday, that I might meet this woman who can give me the means of independence, which would be so hard to ask among my old associates. Well, well, I shall presently see what comes of it. I shall certainly accept, if she offers me any sort of a situation, that a self-respecting man can take. I wonder what strange spite it was the old

lady manifested so plainly to that sweet-looking girl?"

And ending his soliloquy with this query, the young gentleman languidly arose, and made an examination of his hands. There were ugly looking blisters on the palm and wrist, but the inflammation had all passed away, and they were equal to the light service required of them at his toilet, which was just concluded, when John's timid rap at the door announced his approach.

The worthy old servant seemed pleased as well as surprised to find that his guest had anticipated him.

"I am glad to see you so well, sir," said he, "the mistress sends her compliments, and begs you will excuse her this morning from taking breakfast with you."

"I think I should be insane to expect it. How did she pass the night?"

"Very comfortably, but Maria says she had a bad attack this morning. The missus doesn't own it though. It was a terrible narrow escape, terrible narrow, sir."

"It was indeed, and the shock to a lady of such advanced years can hardly fail of being extremely injurious. I hope she has seen the physician again this morning," replied Kent Forsay.

John shook his head.

"Madame Lambert has got a terrible strong constitution, terrible strong," said he.

"You think then she will live the twenty years she calculated upon," observed the young man, carelessly.

"I think she'd do anything she set her mind full upon, if it were to live a hundred years. Madame Lambert has got a terrible will, sir, a terrible will," was the solemn reply.

"So I should judge. Well I have no desire to cut her short a single hour. By the way, who was the young lady who was here—did you know her?"

"No sir, I never saw her before, that I know of, but I think, from madame's looks, that she was one of the Claxtons," and John's voice sank to a portentous whisper.

"And who are the Claxtons, pray," questioned Kent Forsay with increasing interest.

John turned his head, and looked all about, as though fearing the very walls would frown upon him with the mistress's angry eyes, while he answered, in a timid whisper:

"Why, they are the Claxtons."

"Yes, so I suppose," returned Kent Forsay, smiling at the poor old fellow's trepidation, "but what have they to do with Madame Lambert?"

"Why, they are the heirs. When she is dead, they will have it all."

"So, so, I see it all. And madame is going to live twenty years!"

"Mrs. Claxton's mother was Mr. Lambert's daughter by the first wife, and she married poor, and the master got more and more set against her. And there's a large family of them, and the father they say is a cripple, and the mother ill with consumption. Dear, dear! this is a strange world!" And once again John looked around him cautiously, and lowered his voice. "They do say they are as poor as church mice, half starved, and Madame Lambert will live twenty years, you know, all alone in this great house, rolling in riches, and not a shilling can they get. Dear, dear, this is a terrible world!"

"I should think so," said the young man, shuddering at the vision which had come up before him.

"But this will never do for me. I came to ask if you would have chocolate or coffee, and do you like your toast brown, and eggs rare?" exclaimed John, giving himself a shake, as if in punishment for his loquacity.

"You have stated it exactly, brown toast, and rare eggs. But pray don't let that poor Maria put herself to extra trouble. She must have enough to do to attend upon her mistress."

"Lorette, the coachman's daughter, has come, and she doesn't make trouble of anything. But don't blame poor Maria for her stupidity. No one could help having the life frightened out of them—but what I am talking about I don't know. I am terrible stupid myself, terrible stupid, sir."

And giving himself another shake, John fairly ran

out of the room, as if afraid he should commit himself again.

In a little time he was called down to breakfast, and found himself in a little octagon room, panelled with rich old chestnut, and grotesque with carvings. Two arched windows gave a charming bit of landscape, the blue river, and the rising hills beyond, and between a clustering village with cathedral dome, and a slender spire. Lorette, a rosy-cheeked, bright-eyed damsel, evidently understood her business. The table was faultlessly decorated, and only that the table-cloth had a yellowish tinge from lying long in the linen-press, you would never have guessed that all the appurtenances of that breakfast-table had been dragged out from a long, dark repose in the locked closets of the unused dining-room.

The china and crystal shone brightly as well as the massive silver service. It was evident that the instructions had been to do him honour, and Kent Forsay, rather enjoying that belief, sat down with cheery-faced Lorette to pour out his coffee, and certainly did ample justice to the repast.

John looked in, just as he was sauntering towards the window.

"Madame Lambert begs that you will try to find entertainment until this afternoon, when she hopes to see you. Here is the key of the library. I have opened the shutters, and you can go in when you like. It is the third door on the right."

Kent Forsay took the key, feeling somehow like the hero of some fairy story, entertained in an enchanted castle, and presently strolled into the library, and found the dusty shelves so rich in rare treasures, that time and circumstance slipped away from him, and he was profoundly astonished to find, when John came in at last to call him to dinner, that he had spent half a day over the volumes.

And after dinner he was told, though he could scarcely credit it, that the mistress of the house was sitting up, waiting for him to be shown into her presence.

He followed John, who looked, he fancied, a little frightened, with no small degree of interest as to the result of the interview. He was not prepared, however, for the imposing character of the meeting.

Madame Lambert was not in the yellow chamber, but in what John, with a mysterious nod, pronounced "the misus' reception room," an apartment which was calculated to make a deep impression upon its visitor.

The room was long and narrower than any other in the house. The walls were hidden from sight by a sort of curtain of sable velvet, with a heavy silken fringe, which was looped aside here and there, to reveal the vivid pictures arranged in a sort of series; for the same faces could be traced in them all. The windows had the shutters closed, and the dismal black curtains drawn. The carpet, though rich and soft, was of a dead colour like ashes. A single bronze lamp, suspended by bronze chains, gave a dim ghostly illumination. The pictures were startlingly vivid in colouring, and evidently painted by a cunning hand.

Madame Lambert gave him ample time to examine everything, and sat leaning her head against the cushions of her chair, her eyes closed. So the young man, taking the only other chair in the room, gratified his curiosity, while waiting for her to speak.

The longer he looked at them, the more deeply those pictures impressed him. The first was of two children, a boy and a girl playing together, sharing with each other a basket of fruit, and the boy was playfully crowning his companion with a wreath of daisies. In the next the pair had grown into early youth, and were riding together in a pony carriage. The third showed them a young man, handsome, somewhat irresolute in expression, and a brilliant-looking girl who smiled coquettishly, while he was fastening the clasp of her bracelet.

But the next one introduced a third figure, an innocent-looking girl with blonde curls, and large violet eyes. The attitude and position of the group was significant. The haughty brunette was sitting on a rock overhanging vines, which dropped from a gnarled tree. Her lap, and an overturned basket, were filled with purple clusters of grapes, which the young man had evidently gathered for her. But he had turned, half reluctantly, the attitude suggested, in response to the blonde sylph's beckoning finger. The next picture showed the *finale*. The young man, with a blue-eyed bride on his arm, was coming down the church steps, followed by children scattering flowers. Beyond, upon a dreary beach with the cold-looking waves scattering their spray over her, sat the fierce brunette, her hands clasped in her lap, her head bowed, her face expressive of despair. This ended the series on that side. Opposite were vacant panels, and but a single portrait. Kent Forsay shuddered as he looked at it. Terrible anger made the proud features stern and vindictive. A deadly spell seemed

to come from the black eyes, the scorn of the lips was relentless, and implacable.

He started nervously as Madame Lambert's cold, thin voice broke upon him.

"How do you like it? Do you see what it is?" "I think I do. It is Nemesis, of course," answered Kent Forsay.

"Precisely, Nemesis in human form. Be sure she will accomplish her mission!" replied the woman, with a smile, if anything more deadly than that of the picture.

Kent Forsay could scarcely repress a shudder as he looked upon the sallow, ghastly face, fit representative of the fiercest fury beneath that horrible smile, with those wild eyes gleaming so dangerously. He saw that it held lineaments which belonged also to the brunette, and needed no farther explanation of this woman's strange life, and character.

"Let it pass," said she, presently. "We have other matters to discuss now."

"I am glad to see you so far recovered from your injuries," said Kent Forsay.

"Bah! It was little beyond a few hours' smart. It takes more than that to make me ill. I have an iron constitution, like my mother's, and my grandmother's. I shall live twenty years yet."

But Kent Forsay noticed that she kept her hands quiet under the cambric handkerchief thrown over them. He had leisure now to observe her dress, which was a black satin, and to see how fine and costly was the lace which formed a ruffle at the wrists, and gave a yellowish tint then over to the parchment-like skin of the throat, which riveted his attention, because of a costly necklace encircling it, ablaze with rubies and diamonds. The same precious jewels swung from her ears, brushing against the hollow, wrinkled cheek, and putting to sad mockery its mummy-like tint. A chain, formed of massive gold links, alternately set with diamond and ruby, was around her neck. If there had only been a pair of slaves in white turbans with peacock feather fans behind her, the young man would have believed himself transported to some oriental scene, honoured with an interview with the potent Begum. Madame Lambert reached out her hand presently, and took up a paper lying on an ebony box, gold clasped and covered.

"I have been considering," said she, "what I could do for you. If you are a lawyer I will put into your hands quite enough business to satisfy any reasonable demands. Or a doctor—a word from me to the factory agents will give you a run of patients that will certainly keep you in practice, and, to make sure of your fees, they shall be retained from the wages of the operatives. Or again, if you are inclined to the church, there is a living in my gift, which can be freed from its incumbent in a short time. What do you say?"

"That I am deeply sensible of your generous kindness, but I fear I am scarcely fitted for either of the professions. I should prefer some humbler, less responsible situation," replied Kent Forsay.

"In that case you will not approve my next offer, which would be the control of the factories down below, which all belong, as you do not know, perhaps, to the Lambert estate. The property has trebled its value in the last three years."

"No, indeed, not at least until I have mastered the duties of the place. Give me first some book-keeper's situation, some humble duty, and I will be doing my best to fit myself for higher responsibilities," he answered eagerly.

"You have not heard my last proposition, and I admit it is the one which pleases me best. You must know that the oversight of all these different mills, factories, and their numberless agents, looking after rents and troublesome tenants, Bank stock, and all that sort of thing, is no small affair, no idler's life for me."

"I should think not. How wearisome and perplexing it must be!" responded Kent Forsay, in a sympathizing tone, "to a woman, and at your age."

She frowned a little, and there was a tinge of asperity in her tone as she replied:

"On the contrary I have always liked it, and I am as strong and capable in mind and body to-day as I was a decade since. You mistake my meaning. I have allowed no single part of any source of my income to remain unwatched, which accounts for the thriving condition of my affairs, for half the men who depend upon me for their support are thieves by nature. But it absorbs too much of my attention, diverts it from a nearer and more cherished interest. I should like a faithful, honest, keen-eyed man to take the general supervision of it all. To look after the rest of my agents, and make his reports to me. I am not likely to be deceived, rare as my experience may be. I know an honest man when I see one, and I am willing to put all this interest into your hands. You shall have double the salary of any other person connected with my affairs, and

some of them get more than half the young lawyers and doctors in the shire. What do you say?"

"I will endeavour to do my best. I will certainly try it for a time, and see if we are mutually pleased and successful," replied Kent Forsay; "but I fear you do not make allowance for my inexperience."

"I am not afraid," returned she, promptly; "you are quick-witted and sagacious, and an honourable man, though somewhat young. Twenty years, however, will remedy that, and I think I have secured you for that time. Perhaps, when it is over, you will be ready to take the factory business for yourself."

"Twenty years is a long time, and may bring great changes," said Kent Forsay, thoughtfully.

A fiery glow shone over those black pupils of Madame Lambert's eyes, the thin lips twitched into an inhuman smile, glowering and fiend-like.

"Yes," said she, "a whole family might starve to death in that time, or die of hope deferred!"

The young man looked up inquiringly into her face, but she did not see him. She was staring fiercely at the pictured bridal scene, and her thoughts were evidently far away.

It must be confessed her new agent was conscious of a sudden misgiving. What sort of service was this of his likely to prove? He could not repress a momentary shiver. Perhaps Madame Lambert detected it; for, after a quick glance at his face, she roused herself, and returned to the discussion of the new arrangement. Her whole manner seemed to change, as if it were a garment she could put on and take off at pleasure.

"Well," said she, with that wonderful change of smile, for now it was bright, genial, benignant, "since the matter is settled—that you are to take my perplexing affairs into your hands—let us go on to talk of minor affairs. Can you be contented to make your home in this gloomy old house? For a great many reasons I should prefer it, though I do not insist."

"I do not know that I ought to presume so far; your kindness must not allow me to forget that I shall be really one of your servants."

"Bah!" ejaculated Madame Lambert contemptuously. "It is not so. If you are honest and faithful, you will be one of my friends. That is beyond dispute. I am a gloomy old woman, I know, but I have not yet lost the vigour of my mind. I shall enjoy your company, perhaps you will discover mine is not so tame and uninteresting as it might be. I repeat it, we are to be friends. This old house is an interesting one. The library, I think, is excellent, although I have neglected to fill up the modern shelves. I am behind the times, I dare say, but I have not exhausted the sweets, or the strength, of what has been given by the past, so have felt no lack. There are endless stores of pictures, small and large. The late Mr. Lambert went crazy over the fine arts, and you will find treasures, of all sorts, packed away here and there. Although I have added little since the reins came into my hands, I have not reduced the stock, which is more than can be said of some heirs. I repeat that I think we can make you comfortable. You will take your meals alone, because I am fidgety and capricious in my appetite, and vary my hours accordingly. When you have any business matter, which requires attention, you must always send for me, and I, in turn, when I am in the humour for visitors, will summon you to this room. You are to consider yourself at home, and can go where you like about the house, except in these private rooms of mine."

"You are too kind and generous to me. I am afraid I cannot fulfil your expectations."

"That remains to be proved. I will send John to the library with the account books which I kept myself, for, as I said before, I have given no one the chance to impose upon me. They are not in the modern bookkeeper's style, but you will find no difficulty in understanding them. Two of the foremen of the linen factory will come this afternoon with their week's report. I shall be present with you, and you can take notice of my method. In a little while I shall hope to leave you, to attend to them alone. To-morrow it will be well enough for you to take the list of my tenants, and go around and locate them, so that you can understand when I refer to them. I shall keep you pretty busy, and yet you will have as much leisure as in healthy for a young man. Now if you please, touch that bell for me, to summon Maria. There is a book of travels I left on the centre table in the library, which is exceedingly interesting. If you have no other amusement, I recommend you to yield yourself to its fascinations."

She arose from her seat, smiling graciously, and as Maria made her appearance, Kent Forsay bowed himself out of the room.

He drew a long breath, directly he was alone. What was there about this woman which frightened, and yet so fascinated him? How could she seem one

moment like a beneficent fairy, the next like a fiend incarnate, so that he was now ready to admire and love, and now to fear and abhor her?

He saw her again, when the agents came. She had not removed her jewels, but sat in the same weird dignity in the library easy chair. The factory agents, who seemed like honest, intelligent men, looked a little awed, and evinced a great deal of involuntary admiration and respect, which last could hardly be refused to a mind which grasped, so quickly and thoroughly, business details seldom meddled with by women. Her lynx eye discovered a flaw in the report of one, and a mistake in the figures of the other, at the very outset, and her reprimand was not particularly gentle. Kent Forsay took notice of all, and resolved she should find no occasion for rebuke in his returns. When they had gone, she sat a moment thoughtfully.

"Those men are both honest," said she, "they blunder, though, stupidly. I never could be patient with stupid people. I am glad, Mr. Forsay, that I shall not be obliged to mourn the existence of that quality in your character. About that building having been so many days in the painter's hands, you see I know all about it. I drove that way every day. Perhaps you do not know that I drive a great deal. In fact I get most of my sleep on. After I have shown myself wide awake to the town, I make the coachman drive down the river road, and, pulling the curtains over the windows, I take my only nap for the day. I am fond of motion, and that is my only refreshing sleep. So, if you see the coach there, with the curtains drawn, you must not disturb me."

"I hope," said Kent Forsay with genuine concern, "your habit is not generally known, that is, if you wear those jewels. I beg you will pardon me for saying, I think it is extremely imprudent in you, keeping such priceless gems about you, with the full knowledge of the town."

"You think there is danger of my being robbed, do you?" she asked, quietly.

"Or murdered!" returned he, hastily.

She smiled cynically, as she replied:

"Dismiss your fears. There is no danger. Don't you see that every soul who comes near me recognizes the subtle, mysterious power of will which I inherit? Why the stoutest ruffian, who sees me in the street, trembles if I frown upon him. It is strange what a shadowy thing will frighten men! They think I have an uncanny spell, a witch's power, and they are afraid of me. My jewels are safe, so is my gold, if I choose to keep it by me. I tell you they are all afraid of me. Even Maria and John, they would have left my service long ago, if they had dared. You, you alone looked up fearlessly in my face. It was the first attraction which drew me to you. We are to be friends, Kent Forsay. You will never regret the day you saved the life of Ellen Lambert."

CHAPTER IV.

KENT FORSAY spent the next day in making himself familiar with the town, and in visiting the factories down by the river, in what was called the Factory Village. He came home late, caught in a shower, and dripping from head to foot. Mindful of the careful guarding of the carpets, he went through the hall into the little sitting-room for the servants, where John and Maria took their meals, and, taking off his heavy coat, hung it up to dry. John was sitting there with his pipe, solacing himself for his day's drudgery, and beyond, by the window, was standing a queer-looking figure in coarse dilapidated clothing. It was a man beyond middle age, if one judged by the stooping shoulders, and grayish hair, which hung, long and untidy, about his neck and forehead, though his face, what could be seen of it, but for its dead grayness of tint, was unwrinkled and comparatively fresh-looking. A matted beard, equally unacquainted with the razor, fell upon his shabby cloth vest, and a pair of cold gray eyes took a stupid survey of the young gentleman, from his head to his feet, and then turned coldly away.

"It is Mat Rigby, sir, he is the night watchman here, you know," explained John, seeing Kent Forsay's curious glance.

"No, I did not know," replied he, carelessly, "but I am glad to hear there is such a person. I think it is a very important service."

"There is a great bell in the closet there. Mat stays here, and at the approach of any stranger, you know, he is to ring it, and put us all on our guard. But you've never had a chance to use it yet, have you, Mat?"

"Nor I don't want to neither," replied Mat, in a thick guttural voice. "It's a good deal better to sit quiet."

"How long have you served Madame Lambert?" asked Kent Forsay turning to the man.

"Nigh on to a twelvemonth, and I got's three shillings a night, sir. Better than sleeping on the ground, maybe for nothing."

"If I were Madame Lambert I shouldn't trust much to that dull fellow," thought Kent Forsay, carelessly. "I'll go out and get a new pipe, John," said Mat Rigby. "I broke mine in my pocket, and my pipe helps pass the night away."

Saying which he shuffled off out of the door. Kent Forsay turned his coat, shaking it again.

"Let me take it out to the kitchen fire," said John.

"I should have no objection to go myself," replied Kent Forsay, laughing. "I feel quite chilled."

"I'll have a fire in your room," said John, promptly.

"No, oh no, there is no need of your troubling yourself so much. The kitchen fire will do as well. I'll warm myself, and then give up my place to the coat."

And accordingly Kent Forsay walked through the narrow passage, and entered the kitchen. John suggested that he should have a glass of mulled wine, and receiving a silent assent, went down into the cellar for a bottle of the choice old brand, which it took him a long while to find.

Kent Forsay meanwhile talked with Lorette, and when the wine came, in its thin, quaint bottle, cobweb hung, he assisted merrily at the mulling. Just as he had tasted its quality, and pronounced it delicious, the bell from Madame Lambert's chamber rang, which was the signal that John was wanted to receive her last instructions for the day. It was somewhat curious, and a little melancholy to Kent Forsay, to watch the instantaneous disappearance of John's easy, contented expression, and the prompt return of the half-frightened, half stupid look which was all his mistress ever saw.

He hurried off without a word. Kent Forsay presently walked towards the little sitting-room whose door was ajar, quite unconscious that his step was noiseless, but the sight he saw checked him from entering.

Mat Rigby had returned, and probably supposed the new agent had gone up-stairs to his own apartment, for there he stood, in the middle of the room, scowling blackly and shaking that grimy fist of his with force gesticulation, at the tawny coat which hung upon the chair.

"That's odd! I never set eyes on the fellow before! What spite can he have against me?" queried the astonished Kent Forsay, "a man like him couldn't certainly have expected Madame Lambert would give her affairs into his hands. That's a fellow I've got to keep an eye on, of a truth."

And retreating, he made a second move into the sitting-room, humming a tune to give warning of his approach. Mat Rigby scarcely looked up. One would have supposed the new inmate of Greyslope was the last person in the world to be of interest to him, judging by his stolid indifferent manner. Determined to draw him out, if possible, Kent Forsay paused beside him, and began a conversation. Monosyllables, however, were all he obtained in answer.

"I'm sorry you don't like me," said he, as he turned away. "I like to be on friendly terms with everybody in a home, such as I suppose this will be."

Mat raised his head at this.

"I don't see what it need matter about the night watchman. I shan't trouble you, unless you attempt to steal the plate, or madame's jewels."

Kent Forsay fancied there was a sarcastic smile under the grisly moustache.

"Just as you like," answered he, "only as I said before, I like to be on good terms with everybody."

And passing away up-stairs, he said to himself:

"I will watch this Mat Rigby. It would not be strange if it required a spy to look after the watchman. He does not act openly and frankly, as one would expect of him."

The new agent's suspicions were not allayed by the discovery the next day—when Madame Lambert went out for her drive and her novel midday nap—that Mat Rigby, sauntering along the street, apparently without any particular aim, managed to keep in sight of the carriage all the time. And again, when that imperious lady had received her remittances in gold, and despite Kent Forsay's suggestions, refused to put them in the bank, but threw the bags carelessly into her iron-bound chest, which stood in her mysterious reception-room, who should the young man discover, standing on the outer balcony, which commanded, through a lancet window, and the open door of the black shrouded chamber, a view of the whole affair, but Mat Rigby? And though the next instant, his face was as stolid and impassive as usual, Kent Forsay was positive, at the moment of recognition, there was an angry, greedy sparkle in his eye. He seized the opportunity to allude to the

man, and discover Madame Lambert's opinion of him.

"Look, madame," said he, "has that man any necessity to be on the balcony? Do you know he saw me counting out the gold to you, and must have been aware that you put it into the chest? Positively your carelessness frightens me."

She looked up with a startled glance, but perceiving who it was, answered carelessly:

"It is odd that a young man should have so many fears, where a feeble woman feels perfectly secure. Don't you see that it is Rigby, the night watchman?"

"Yes, but he is all the more dangerous for being admitted inside the house, knowing just where all your valuables are kept," returned Kent Forsay.

She laughed a little contemptuously.

"For that matter, so are you, and John, and Maria. But I am perfectly secure in my trust of you, and I know John and Maria are too much afraid of me to do any harm. No, no, it is very good of you to be so anxious about my safety, but I assure you there is no occasion for it."

"You have perfect confidence in this Rigby, then?" continued Kent Forsay.

"Why, yes, I suppose so. He has been here now more than a year. Time enough—in that time—to have betrayed sinister designs, if there were any such. To tell the truth, I think the poor old fellow is attached to me in a brute sort of fashion. He was a most forlorn-looking object, I can tell you, when I first saw him. I was riding in my carriage, and he picked up a handkerchief that blew away from me, and when I offered to pay him he would not take it, but said he was a poor wretch to whom everybody refused work, and asked me if there was nothing I could set him about, to earn enough to keep him alive. I was just thinking then about keeping a watchman. It was after that horrible murder of the old woman in Lincolnshire. But the imprudent fellows all wanted double wages, and I wasn't to be imposed upon in that fashion. So I gave this man the chance, and he has filled the place ever since, and never asked for an increase of pay. I should as soon think of being afraid of a fly, as of poor Rigby."

"But, what is he doing there, I should like to know," persisted Kent Forsay.

"What a wifely fellow you are!" answered Madame Lambert. "I'll ask him to satisfy you." And moving slowly across the corridor, she opened the window, and called to the man.

"Here, Rigby; what are you doing up here? I should like to know why you are here?"

Rigby turned, without the slightest sign of trepidation.

"I was taking a look, madame, at this balcony, and seeing if it was possible for a man to swing himself from that water-spout to the railing. It was done in the town last week, they say, and the robber got in by the window, and made a rich haul. I was thinking about it, 'cause I wasn't sure I should hear anything of it, down there in the servant's room, and I asked John if I could come up, and take a look. There's been some bold doings lately, madame, and it's well enough to look after these things."

"Yes, I suppose so. But it don't fret me much. He would be a bold robber who entered here, and I fancy he would rue the attempt pretty sorely."

"I should do my best," answered Mat Rigby, without a single change of expression on his apathetic face.

"And so should I," replied Madame Lambert, setting her thin lips vindictively, "and that would be more than any of you suspect."

And she walked back to Kent Forsay.

"You have all 'burglary-on-the-brain,' I think," said she; "the poor fellow, instead of deserving your suspicions, was looking out for our safety. He was examining, to see if anyone could swing from the water-spout to the balcony."

"I am glad if he be really innocent," answered Kent Forsay, "but I must continue to remonstrate. Your lawyer was speaking about it to me this morning, when I went to obtain his accounts. He tells me that your large surplus of income is not securely invested, but converted into gold, and taken into your own charge. My dear Madame Lambert, you must not be angry if I express myself plainly. Such a course is not only utterly folly with regard to economy of your finances, but it is madness as regards your safety. Such a sum of money in gold, as you possess, would be enough to tempt an organized band to systematic efforts. They would rob you, and murder us all, with perfect impunity."

"Nonsense!" said she, impatiently, "you will not frighten me, any of you. I tell you I might leave my doors open, and no one would venture across the threshold. They are all afraid of me, and well they may be!" And Kent Forsay took leave of her with only this much satisfaction. As soon as he was gone,

Madame Lambert closed the door, dropped every curtain, and kneeling down before the chest, she lifted up the lid and looked in, her eyes shining with a wild, glowing light which made them more strange than ever.

She took out the bags of gold which had just been consigned to her, and held them up, her long skinny fingers stroking them caressingly, while she murmured:

"So they think I keep you by me, pretty ones! They think I have a great chest piled high with you. Ha! ha! fools! As if I did not know the safer investment. As if I worked, pinched, and contrived to save so much, to fall into the hands of those hated Claxtons, should one of the miserable race be left, in twenty years. No, no, I know a better way than that, I know a better way than that!"

And she put the gold into a wicker basket, carefully tied down the cover, and set it aside.

That afternoon when she took her ride, she had that basket on her arm, taking especial pains to lift it as though it were light and empty. Mat Rigby, still loitering about, saw her, and as his gray eyes dwelt a moment upon it, he smiled, a cold, deadly, sarcastic smile. No one, however, saw it, not even Kent Forsay, who was in the library, deep into accounts.

At a small fruiterer's madame's carriage drew up, and the lady alighted, went in, carrying the basket still. She handed it to a man who came from behind a desk, at sight of the carriage.

"You will fill it with your best oranges," said she. He bowed with the greatest respect, and taking the basket, went off into the back room, too hurried, perhaps, to notice that a keen gray eye was looking through the dusty and weather-stained window, which gave light to the little den, from a back passage way.

Madame received her basket, filled with the tempting fruit, and drove away, the polite dealer bowing from the door, until the carriage turned the corner.

And here occurred a curious incident which no one but the reader and myself could ever have mistrusted. Mat Rigby, sauntering on into a sort of shed for the reception of boxes and bales, with one swift movement, pulled off the gray whiskers and moustache. The long matted locks followed suit, then with a swiftness one could never have expected from his slow, rigid movements, he had removed his coat, and turning it, the dusty, dilapidated gray affair had vanished, and there it was, a respectable looking, dark blue coat with shining brass buttons! He put it on, stuffed the trimmings which made him into Madame Lambert's old watchman, into his pocket, straightened up the bowed form, and walked out of the other end of the alley, a rather grave-looking, but by no means disagreeable young man.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

THERE is a paper race-boat in Portland 31½ ft. long, 12 in. wide, and weighing but 22 lb. The lightest wooden boat of similar dimensions weighs 41 lb. The most singular part of the matter is that the paper boat is four times stronger than one of wood. All that portion save where the sculler sits is gas-tight, so that in the event of a race sufficient gas may be taken into it to reduce its weight to 8 lb.

HERB C. SCHING has shown, by the application of the thermo-electric pyrometer, that the temperature of a glass furnace in operation is only from 1100 deg. to 1250 deg. Cent. Crystal glass becomes completely liquid at 929 deg. Cent., and is worked at 839 deg. A Bohemian glass tube softens at 769 deg., and becomes liquid at 1052 deg. Cent. Pure limestone loses its carbonic acid by heating for several hours at 617 deg. to 675 deg. Cent. The gas can be driven off more rapidly by increasing the temperature.

THE EMBRYO HEART.—HERT S. L. Schenck has published a paper on the physiology of the embryo. Examining the heart of the chick in the egg of the fowl, he discovered that its movements are, at first, quite independent of the central nervous system, and may be regarded as simple contractions of the protoplasm. When the heart is removed, it still beats, if maintained at a temperature of from 84 deg. to 86 deg. Centigrade. The most powerful microscope fails to show any trace of nervous ganglia; hence, he concludes that the contractions of the heart are due simply to the action of heat on the protoplasm.

In making large bells, loudness, rather than their pitch, is the object, as their sound can be conveyed to a much greater distance. This accounts for the enormous weight of some of the largest bells. St. Paul's, for instance, weighs 43,000 lb.; that of Antwerp, 16,000 lb.; Oxford, 17,000 lb.; Rome, 19,000 lb.; Mechlin, 20,000 lb.; Bruges, 23,000 lb.; York, 24,000 lb.;

Cologne, 25,000 lb.; Montreal, 29,000 lb.; Erfurt 30,000 lb.; Big Ben (House of Parliament), 41,000 lb.; Sens, 54,000 lb.; Vienna, 40,000 lb.; Novgorod, 62,000 lb.; Pekin, 130,000 lb.; and that of Moscow, 141,000 lb. But, as yet, the greatest bell ever known is another famous Moscow bell, which was never hung. It was cast by order of the Empress Anne, in 1659. It lies broken on the ground, and is estimated to weigh 441,772 lb. It is 19 ft. high, and measures round the margin 64 ft. There are few bells of interest in the United States. The largest is probably the alarm bell on the City Hall, in New York, weighing about 23,000 lb.

CAST-IRON STOVES A CAUSE OF DISEASE.

WHEN the attention of the Academy of Sciences of Paris was drawn some time since by M. Carret, one of the physicians of the Hôtel Dieu of Chambery, in several papers, to the possible evil consequences of the use of cast-iron stoves, but little interest was excited in the matter. Recently, General Morin has again brought the subject forward with better success. M. Carret does not hesitate to assert most positively that cast-iron stoves are sources of danger to those who habitually employ them. During an epidemic which recently prevailed in Savoy, but upon which M. Carret does not furnish us with any detailed information, he observed that all the inhabitants who were affected with it made use of cast-iron stoves, which had lately been imported into the country, whereas all those who employed other modes of firing, or other sorts of stoves, were left untouched by the disease. An epidemic of typhoid fever, which broke out some time after at the Lyceum of Chambery, was regarded by the same author as being influenced by a large cast-iron stove in the children's dormitory. General Morin speaks in the highest terms of M. Carret's memoirs, to which the recent experiments of MM. Trelost and Deville give additional importance. These able investigators have established that iron and cast-iron when heated to a certain degree became pervious to the passage of gas. They have been enabled to state the quantity of oxide of carbon which may, as they suppose, transude from a given surface of metal, and have shown that the air which surrounds a stove of cast-iron is saturated with hydrogen and oxide of carbon. They conclude that cast-iron stoves when sufficiently heated absorb oxygen, and give issue to carbonic acid.

General Morin related some comparative experiments which had been performed by M. Carret, and which, he said, corroborate this theory. Thus, after having remained during one full hour in a room heated to forty deg. (Centigrade) by means of a sheet-iron stove, M. Carret perspired abundantly, got a good appetite, but felt no sickness whatever; he had obtained the same result with an earthenware stove; but the experiment, when performed during only one half hour with a cast-iron stove, had brought on intense headache and sickness. M. Deville, at the same sitting of the Academy, supported these views with considerable warmth. The danger which attended the use of cast-iron stoves, he said, was enormous and truly formidable. In his lecture-room at the Sorbonne, he had placed two electric bells, which were set in motion as soon as hydrogen or oxide of carbon was diffused in the room. Well, during his last lecture, the two cast-iron stoves had scarcely been lit when the bells began to ring.

These facts are certainly startling, if we consider the reputation of comparative harmlessness which these articles of domestic use had hitherto enjoyed. In France, particularly, the lodgings of the poorer classes, the barrack-rooms of the soldiery, the artists' studios, the class-rooms of large schools, &c., are commonly heated by this means. Of course, we are inclined to question M. Carret's conclusions; but the apparently accurate character of the facts recorded, joined to the authority of those who have brought them forward, demand for them a serious investigation. We are glad to be able to add that a committee has been appointed by the Academy for the purpose of examining thoroughly into the subject. This committee is composed of MM. Claude Bernard, Morin, Frémy, Deville, and Bussy, and we shall not fail, when the time comes, to mention what shall have been the results of their researches.

ACCORDING to Dr. Moffat, when phosphorus is kept in water and air in a non-luminous state, the water and air become phosphorated, and then become phosphorescent on their temperature being increased, and ozone is formed during their phosphorescence. Water reduced to the freezing point also becomes phosphorated, and it becomes phosphorescent on being heated. Phosphorus in a non-luminous state does not produce ozone; phosphorated air and water are not ozonized, but they are ozonized when phosphorescent.

IMPROVEMENT IN TELEGRAPHIC DESPATCHES.—Within the last few days the French telegraphic

administration has introduced an ingenious check against accidents or intentional alterations in telegraphic despatches on Hughes's system. Heretofore the strip containing the message was merely gummed on to a half-sheet of paper in which it was despatched, and might with little trouble be detached and changed. To prevent this, the despatch, after being attached to the paper, is passed between a pair of watering rollers, so that any displacement will be shown by the interference with the lines of the pattern; and, in addition to this, the words "Empire Français, Ministère de l'Intérieur, Administration des Lignes Télégraphiques" run across the surface of the despatch, and form an additional guarantee.

FOUNDATIONS UNDER WATER.

An engineer engaged upon a large work abroad writes us that he is putting in a concrete foundation in 35 ft. of water, after having sunk a wooden bottomless caisson through 28 ft. of sand down to the rock. This was done by dredging, and by employing jets of water, under high pressure, on the outside, much in the manner of Mr. Brunel's jet-sunk disc piles.

By thus lessening the sand friction, this wooden enclosure has been got down with a weight of only 277 lb. per square foot of surface in contact. The weight required without the assistance of jets would have been from 400 lb. to 700 lb. per square foot. At the important works of the bridge over the Rhine, at Kehl, the weight, after allowing for the upward pressure of the compressed air, was 767 lb. per square foot.

ONE of the most important of recent discoveries of the archaeological sort has been made in Rome. This is nothing less valuable than eight of the missing fragments of the plan of ancient Rome, which was incised in marble by order of Antoninus Caracalla, and is famous under the name of the *Pianita Capitolina*, and occupies part of the sides of the staircase in the Capitoline Museum. Two of the eight pieces are of considerable dimensions; one of the other fragments illustrates the Porticus Livie in the most satisfactory manner.

THE Inland Revenue, to the officers of which department has been delegated the duty of collecting the new dog-tax, have received payment on no less than 400,000 dogs more than were hunted up by the old parochial collectors.

THE Board of Customs have rescinded the obnoxious and unjust order which they recently made to deprive writers of their pay on those days of departmental holiday—Christmas Day, Good Friday, and the Queen's birthday.

A FISHMONGER was a short time since fined 20s. a shrimp for 2,040 shrimps that were unfit for food. In all his fine was 40,800s., but it was reduced to twenty shillings. The law that was made for 20s. a shrimp fine, was a nice specimen of modern legislation. Is it quite certain that the offender was not to be hanged for each shrimp?

THAT'S IT.—Stop grumbling. Get up two hours earlier in the morning, and begin to do something out of your regular profession. Mind your own business, and with all your might let other people's alone. Live within your means. Sell your horses. Give away or sell your dog. Smoke your cigar through an air-stove. Eat with moderation and go to bed early. Talk less of your own peculiar gifts and virtues, and more of those of your friends and neighbours. Be cheerful. Fulfill your promises. Pay your debts. Be yourself all you would see in others. Be a good man, and stop grumbling.

REMARKABLE GOLD COIN.—A very remarkable gold coin has recently been brought to this country from India. Its value and importance appear in a few words of description communicated by General A. Cunningham. "But what," he writes, "is a double gold mohur compared to the great gold Eucratides which has just been brought from Bokhara by Aga Zebalun Bokhâri? It is two inches and a-half in diameter, and weighs ten statera, or eleven guineas! It has the usual helmeted head on one side, with the horseman and inscription on the reverse. The owner has refused 700l. for it. It is genuine, and beats all the Greek coins hitherto discovered."

GLASS AT THE METROPOLITAN MEAT MARKET.—The difficulties with which some branches of English trade have to contend when brought into competition with foreigners has recently been exemplified with reference to a contract taken for covering in with glass the roof of the new Metropolitan Meat Market. We are informed that the lowest English tender was that of the Glass Works at Nailsea, which offered to supply the requisite quality of glass at 11½d. per square foot, but a Belgian house obtained the order, their terms being, for precisely the same material, 4½d. per square foot. The comparative cost of labour at home and abroad makes all the difference.



[A TETE-A-TETE INTERRUPTED.]

MICHELDEVER

CHAPTER IV.

THE moon had risen and was pouring a flood of light through the uncurtained window; the two often sat thus on summer nights, without the light of a lamp to break the spell of the weird music M. Lapierre was so fond of playing; and, when she was left alone, the girl did not light one.

She opened a door which led into a smaller room fitted up as a sleeping apartment. A priedieu was placed beside the bed, above which hung a crucifix of carved ivory; Claire knelt upon the cushion, and, after praying long and fervently, she arose and prepared herself for repose.

In the meantime, M. Lapierre visited the apartment in which Walter Thorne was tossing in restless sleep. Without disturbing him, he made as careful an examination of his condition as was possible, and left the room with a troubled and amazed expression.

He muttered:

"This young stranger may be ill on my hands—he may be long recovering; and then, heaven knows what may be the result of his unfortunate detention here. Yet, he must stay—there is no help for it, though something tells me that evil will come from him to me and mine."

Poor father! if he could only have lifted the veil from the future, and seen what was to be the result of that young man's advent beneath his roof, I am afraid that he would very reluctantly have used such skill as he possessed, to save the life of the stranger he had taken in.

After thinking over the late scene, Walter Thorne, through sheer weariness, fell into an uneasy slumber, which was broken by the sound of a carriage driven to the door. He half arose from his recumbent position, and looked dreamily towards the entrance, wondering who could be coming to break the tranquil repose of everything around him.

M. Lapierre ushered into the apartment a lady, followed by a little girl about nine years of age. In his quick way the old Frenchman said:

"How are you by this time, Mr. Thorne? I have brought you a visitor. Mrs. Courtney, of the Grange, was kind enough to become interested in my account of you and your wonderful escape, and she proposed herself to come and see you."

Thorne made as courteously a bow as was possible under the circumstances, and said:

"I am sure that I am grateful for Mrs. Courtney's

kindness. Indeed, I feel quite honoured by receiving the first call from a lady."

In his heart he felt the deepest annoyance that an observant and worldly-wise woman should come, probably to put an end to the sweet love idyl he was beginning to find so entrancing, but his manner was that of the most polished courtier.

Mrs. Courtney came towards him with the quiet grace of perfect good-breeding, and he saw that the refined sweetness of her fair face was but the reflex of the spirit within. She was a tall, well-formed woman, still wearing widow's weeds, though her husband had been dead for many years, and they set off the delicate fairness of her complexion, blonde hair and clear blue eyes, with much greater effect than colours could have done.

Though the mother of a son who had numbered nineteen years, Mrs. Courtney was still a most attractive and elegant looking woman. In a voice as refined as her appearance was pleasing, she addressed the invalid:

"Pray do not attempt to rise, Mr. Thorne. My old friend, M. Lapierre, has been telling me of your marvellous escape, and I became so much interested in the hero of such an adventure, that I determined to come and see you. It was lucky for you that our friend possesses such skill in medicine, or your fever might have proved serious."

Thorne, in spite of his usual self-possession, was embarrassed and annoyed, and he could find nothing better to say than:

"I am sure I am much obliged to M. Lapierre for his kindness; and to you, madam, for the interest you are good enough to express in myself. As to my heroic qualities, the less said about them the better, I am afraid. The least courageous creature will do battle for life. I confess that the struggle tasked all my resources, but I was fortunate enough to win. Thanks to my kind host, I shall soon be able to resume my wanderings, but they can be to little purpose now, as I was unfortunate enough to lose my portfolio and its contents, and I suppose they were swallowed up in the Lady's Tarn."

She smiled and replied:

"It was partly to inform you of their safety that I came hither, Mr. Thorne. Let me explain: one of my servants was sent on an errand beyond the valley on Saturday. He chose the short cut through the pass, and he found lying against the large boulder that stands above the tarn a portfolio with an oilskin cover over it. I know it is yours, for your name was written on the backs of several of the sketches. The water has scarcely injured them at all, and I should have brought them with me, if I

had not made up my mind that you are to return with me to the Grange, and be nursed back into health there. I hope you will not decline my invitation, for my artistic taste is such that it will afford me much pleasure to claim one of the craft as my guest for a season."

Thorne flushed, looked more annoyed than before, and said:

"You are too good, Mrs. Courtney; but—really I feel unable to exchange my quarters just at present, and I find myself so well off here, that I think I had better remain, at least till I regain my strength. M. Lapierre has not yet dismissed me as a patient, and grateful as I am to you, I think I had rather stay with those who have taken such good care of me."

Mrs. Courtney earnestly replied:

"Believe me, the change I propose will be better for all concerned, Mr. Thorne. M. Lapierre comes to my house every day, and he can watch over your convalescence as well there as here. I insist that you shall have no scruples on the score of our recent acquaintance; and it will be no trouble to me to receive an invalid. I have an experienced nurse in my family, and your room is already prepared for your reception. It will be a pleasure to me to entertain you, and it will be far more convenient to me to have a sick guest on my hands, than it is to my friends here."

M. Lapierre had left the room in search of his daughter, followed by the little girl, and rightly interpreting the clouded face of the young man, Mrs. Courtney chose to place before him what she hoped would prove a conclusive reason for his removal.

Thorne coldly replied:

"You are very kind, madam, but I must say that I should prefer remaining here a few days longer. I shall give as little trouble as possible, and I can offer to my host such an equivalent as he will not refuse to accept. To you I could offer nothing of the kind, and I cannot consent to thrust myself on the charity of a perfect stranger. Accident threw me on the kindness of M. Lapierre, but with you it would be different."

Mrs. Courtney regarded him with a penetrating glance; she presently asked with extreme gravity:

"Can you not divine my motive, sir, for insisting on carrying you off to the Grange, in spite of such opposition as you may offer?"

Thorne looked up, but his eyes fell before the clear orbs that were fastened upon his face.

"I—I am at a loss to understand you, madam," was the evasive reply.

"Then I shall be perfectly frank with you, sir. M.

Lapierre has a young and very lovely daughter, who is just at the most susceptible age. Claire is too attractive for her own good, I am afraid, and she is far too inexperienced to know her own danger before it is too late. I take a deep interest in her, for she is my god-daughter, and also a distant relative of my children. As soon as M. Lapierre related his story, and gave me a personal description of yourself, I decided that you must remove to my house. It is improper for a young girl like Claire to be left to nurse and amuse a young man so attractive as yourself; and M. Lapierre's engagements must take him from home many hours of every day. Now, you will consent to go back with me, Mr. Thorne, for you are too much of a gentleman to abuse the hospitality of this good old man, by trifling with his daughter. Excuse my plainness of speech, but it is best to be candid with each other under the circumstances."

Thorne arose, and, with heat, exclaimed: "I find you too frank, Mrs. Courtney, and I scarcely know how to receive such insinuations. Do you suppose that I could be villain enough to act dishonourably towards such an angel of sweetness and beauty as Claire Lapierre? I admit that I have felt the force of her attractions, and I will be as frank with you as you have chosen to be with me. I have made up my mind to the course I will pursue, and nothing shall turn me from it. My father is a man of high position and great wealth; I am his only child, and must eventually inherit the latter. The object of my choice is well connected, so there can be no objection on the score of family; and as to fortune, Claire is so highly endowed in other respects that my father will hardly insist on that. You are the friend of this old gentleman and his daughter, Mrs. Courtney, and in your hands I think I may venture to place my cause. I can elevate your young protégée to a brilliant position, and I pledge you my honour to remove such difficulties as may be in the way of our speedy union."

Mrs. Courtney listened to this abrupt avowal with extreme surprise. She very gravely asked:

"Are you quite sure that your father would consent to your marriage with a girl in so obscure a position as that of Claire? I scarcely think so young a man as yourself at liberty to dispose of his hand, without first consulting his friends. It is but a few days since you were received here, and the passion you have so suddenly conceived for my young friend may die out as suddenly as it sprang into existence."

"That is impossible, for her very presence is joy and life to me. The consent of my father must be won; it shall be, for nothing shall stand between myself and the enchanting being I have already learned to love with all the fervent passion of my heart."

Mrs. Courtney reflected a few moments, and then said:

"You seem to be deeply in earnest, Mr. Thorne, and I will not question the statements you have made to me; but you must be aware that a father cannot give up his child to a stranger, without making such inquiry into his antecedents as will assure him as far as possible that she will be happy and respected in her new estate."

"Of course I will submit to any inquiry M. Lapierre may desire to make."

"He will have ample time for that, for Claire is yet too young to marry. She is not fifteen, and two years at least must elapse before you would be permitted to claim her as your wife."

"Two years!" exclaimed the lover in an accent of despair. "Two ages of doubt, fear, and separation! My dear madam, say two months of delay, and I will consent to wait that time for my happiness, but not beyond it. I can remain in the valley till September, but when I leave it Claire must be my companion."

Mrs. Courtney smiled faintly, but she decisively said:

"That will be quite impossible. M. Lapierre will never consent to give up his daughter at so tender an age; and, moreover, if she is to fill a high position, she must complete her imperfect education. Claire has had few advantages, but I shall do all that is in my power to afford her more. I have always intended to do so, when she was old enough to be sent away to a boarding-school. I have not hitherto spoken of it to her father, because I have a prejudice against sending a girl from her own home, till she is mature enough to have some character of her own, and not be too much influenced by her new associations. Besides, Claire is so great an idol with her father that I believed it would be difficult to win his consent to a separation from her."

"I am sincerely glad to hear the last statement, madam; for Claire, in her sweet and guileless simplicity, is far more attractive than the finest model young lady ever turned out of a fashionable school. I entreat that you will lay aside such a plan for her benefit, and, in its place, win M. Lapierre's

consent to an early union between his daughter and myself. Girls often marry as young—nay, judging from your appearance, you must have married at a very early age yourself, for I have been told that you are the mother of a grown-up son."

The lady blushed slightly as she replied: "Yes, I gave my hand to my husband when I was little older than Claire now is; but I was an orphan and not happily situated, that was my excuse."

"I do not think you needed one, Mrs. Courtney, and I am sure that you never had cause to regret your early marriage."

Tears sprang to her eyes, and in a low voice she said:

"No, never. For ten years of my life I was a happy wife. My first great sorrow was the loss of my husband."

"Then you will induce M. Lapierre to permit his daughter to follow your example, for I swear to you that I will be as tender and true to her as Mr. Courtney was to yourself."

And, in making this assertion, the infatuated lover believed he spoke the simple truth.

Carried away by the violence of the passion he had so suddenly conceived, Walter Thorne believed it would be easy to overcome impossibilities; to make the way clear before him in spite of all the obstacles that lay in his path. To win Claire, he thought he would brave and triumph over every difficulty.

After a pause, Mrs. Courtney gravely said:

"This is a strange interview between two persons who have so recently met as you and I. You must give me time to reflect on what you have said, Mr. Thorne, and to decide as to what will be best for the happiness of my god-child. Of course, I must consider her first, for I stand almost in the place of a mother to her."

"That is enough, madam. But I hope that no restraint will be placed on my intercourse with the object of my choice; and that I may now be permitted to remain the guest of M. Lapierre. When my health is perfectly restored, I will, with pleasure, spend a few days at the Grange; but just now I think I shall recover more rapidly if I am not removed against my will."

"I do not know as to that. The question of your stay must be settled by M. Lapierre; for, of course, I am at liberty to reveal to him what you have just said to me, and thus pave the way for you to speak to him yourself."

"Use your own discretion, dear madam. When I place before the old gentleman all the advantages to be secured by my speedy union with his daughter, I dare to flatter myself that he will not be so blind to her interests as to refuse to give her to me as my wife. I shall write, without delay, to my native town, and have forwarded to me such proofs of what I have stated of my position and prospects, as will satisfy both you and him of the truth of my assertions."

"You must settle that with M. Lapierre; if he consents to receive your proposal favourably, you can remain here till you are stronger; but then I shall expect you to come to me; remember that."

Thorne could only bow his acquiescence, for M. Lapierre came in again, followed by Claire, to whom Julia was fondly clinging. She held up a bouquet, and said:

"Mamma, see what beautiful flowers Claire has gathered for me. Shant she go home with us when we take the strange gentleman away?"

"But he is not going with us, Julia. He says that he is not strong enough to be removed."

As Mrs. Courtney spoke, she glanced keenly from father to daughter, to see the effect of this announcement. A cloud came over the face of the former, but the flash of joy that beamed for an instant on the face of Claire assured her that already had this stranger made a deep impression on her young heart. As she looked again at him, she was scarcely surprised at this, for he was singularly handsome, and distinguished in appearance, and he had already avowed himself passionately in love with her.

M. Lapierre approached the sofa on which his guest was now sitting up, and quietly said:

"I think you are quite well enough, Mr. Thorne, to risk so short a drive as the one from here to the Grange. You will be much more comfortable there; and, inhospitable as it may seem, I must say that it will be best for you to accept the courteous invitation of Mrs. Courtney."

With a faint smile, Thorne replied:

"I appreciate Mrs. Courtney's kindness very highly. I assure you; but I find myself so well off here that I prefer not to change my quarters just yet. I promise to encroach upon your hospitality as short a time as possible, M. Lapierre; and as soon as I have regained sufficient strength to walk over to the Grange, I will relieve you of my presence."

M. Lapierre's face brightened at this assurance, and he more cordially said:

"So long as you need the shelter of my roof, and the exercise of my skill in your behalf, both are at your service."

He drew nearer to him, and, in a low tone, added: "You should understand why I seem to violate the rules of hospitality in your case. It is not seemly that you should be left to the care of a young girl like Claire, while I am compelled to be away."

"I comprehend that, monsieur; but no harm shall come to your daughter through that association, I pledge you my honour."

The speaker frankly extended his hand, while he looked clearly into the eyes of the old man, and victimized as M. Lapierre had already been by placing too much confidence in others, he obeyed the dictates of his own honourable mind, and gave implicit trust to the assurance he had received. He accepted the proffered hand, and then turned towards Mrs. Courtney, who drew him into the parlour to speak of the strange declaration his young guest had made.

Thorne called Julia to his side, and was soon engaged in an animated conversation with her, in which she confidentially informed him that Claire was her cousin, ever so many times removed, but she loved her as dearly as if she were her sister, and wished she could always have her at the Grange to play with and pet her. But her mamma had promised that some day Claire should live there, for M. Lapierre often talked of going to some distant country, and then her pretty cousin would come to stay with her mamma and herself for all the rest of her life. Would not that be nice?

The listener smiled indulgently on her prattle, and said: "Very nice for you, little lady, but not so pleasant for somebody else I could name," and he glanced towards Claire to see the effect of his words. He saw that her cheek flushed slightly, but she would not look towards him, and with widely opened eyes, Julia shrewdly asked:

"Who is it that wants to take my Rosebud away from me? Is it you? But you can't have her, for I want her, and you have not loved her as long as I have."

Claire turned rapidly towards the talkative child, and exclaimed: "What are you saying, there, enfant terrible! Come to me, Julia; you will tire Mr. Thorne, and annoy him."

In the meantime Mrs. Courtney and M. Lapierre had walked out, and stood beneath the shade of the trees, talking earnestly together. The face of the father was pale and disturbed, as he said:

"That was a very singular coincidence to pass between yourself and this young man, in the first hour of your meeting, madam. I cannot understand how he became so communicative to an utter stranger. Nor am I at all pleased with the sudden avowal he has made."

"I did not suppose you would be, and I was as much surprised at his frankness as you seem to be. When he saw that I had determined on taking him away with me, he came at once to the point. He seems very much in earnest, and I really think he has fallen desperately in love with Claire. Of course it is for you to judge of the propriety of encouraging his passion. I spoke of Claire's extreme youth, but he set that objection aside, declaring that it is his most earnest desire to elevate her at once to the position of his wife. He offered to satisfy you in every respect, and to prove to you that he is the heir to immense wealth; but he will speak with you himself on this subject as soon as you afford him the opportunity."

M. Lapierre leaned on the gate as if to sustain himself, and his slender form shook with the emotions that arose within him. At length, in a hoarse voice, he said:

"But for one thing, I would send him from my house, and never permit Claire to see him again; but—but the time draws near when she will be left alone in the world. Alone, and in deep sorrow, poor child!"

"What can you mean, M. Lapierre? You surely do not apprehend any evil to yourself. You are as strong and well as usual."

With a look of inexpressible weariness and sadness on his sorrowful face, the old Frenchman regarded her a few moments, and then slowly said:

"A little while, and the earth will know me no longer. For four generations, no male member of my family has lived to complete his sixtieth year. I am drawing near that anniversary, and I have already had my warning."

Mrs. Courtney looked at him as if she thought his mind wandering. She hurriedly asked:

"What delusion is this, M. Lapierre? I thought you too clear-headed a man to put faith in such nonsense. You are strong and well, and you should not suffer your imagination to run away with your sober senses."

He dreamily shook his head.

"I have not; I remember remonstrating in the same way with my father, when he told me of his summons, but when it came the third time, he went and so shall I. I would evade my doom if I could—but it is impossible."

"In heaven's name! what are you talking of?" exclaimed his companion, growing pale. "Explain the nature of this superstition, for it can be nothing else."

"Perhaps it is, but it is fatal, for all that, to those of my race. I have twice dreamed that my father appeared at my bedside, holding in his hand a branch of immortelles, which he lightly laid upon my breast, saying: 'Come to me; when I touch you with this the third time, you will have everlasting life.' He has appeared to me twice lately, with an interval of a few weeks between his visits; the third one will be fatal to me."

The tone of sad conviction in the speaker's voice made Mrs. Courtney shudder, though she tried to conceal from him the emotion she felt. She quietly said:

"Your system must be out of order, or you would not have such dreadful visions. 'Physician heal thyself,' for I am sure you have the skill to do it."

"Ah, if I had the power, how gladly would I exorcise this dreary phantom, but I cannot. I have not told you that for generations this warning has been sent to us. The father summons his son, and two months are allowed him in which to set his house in order, then the curtain falls on the scene of struggle and sorrow through which mortals are doomed to pass. But for my daughter, I should be willing to go; but her helplessness, her dependence on others when I am taken from her, are constantly before me. Perhaps, in His infinite mercy, the *bon Dieu* has opened before me a way to provide for her, and console her for my loss, by sending this young stranger at this time. He can give her a home, and a future worthy of her beauty and sweetness; but she is too young to become his wife, and I fear his passion is far too sudden to prove lasting. If I listen to his proposal in my anxiety to secure her worldly welfare, I may but give her over to lasting wretchedness."

"If such be your feelings, then send Mr. Thorne away as soon as possible, and if your presentiments prove true, give Claire to me. I have the best claim upon her, and I promise to act the part of a mother by her. But I hope, in spite of your dreary fancies, that you will yet live many years to smile over the painful delusion from which you are now suffering."

"Would to heaven it might be so, but I know too well that I must soon leave my child. But I can trust her to you, dear and noble friend, to whom I already owe so much, and I have no words to thank you for your generous offer. If my darling cares for this young man, she can remain with you till he can honourably claim her, with the consent of her friends. I could not permit her to enter his family without that, and I am not quite satisfied with Mr. Thorne's precipitate declaration. He has known us too brief a time to speak of love and marriage; yet if my darling can be happy with him I shall not suffer my objections to stand in the way of her settlement in life."

Thus wavering between his desire to know that his daughter's future was provided for, before he passed away himself, and his fear that her lover was scarcely trustworthy, M. Lapierre talked on for some time with Mrs. Courtney. It was finally agreed between them that Thorne was to be permitted to speak for himself, and his future father-in-law would decide as to what should be the fate of his wooing.

Had not M. Lapierre believed that his hold on life was so feeble, he would never, for an instant, have listened to the proposal of this stranger to woo and win his daughter; but impressed with the fatal idea that a few more weeks must be the limit of his earthly life, he was ready to grasp at anything that promised a fairer future for the object of his most tender solicitude, than dependence even on so kind a friend as Mrs. Courtney.

They at length returned to the house, M. Lapierre looking paler than usual, and Mrs. Courtney very thoughtful, for his earnestness had deeply and sadly impressed her, in spite of her incredulity. She could detect no signs of decay in him; he looked as alert and strong as at any time during the previous ten years of his life, yet in some way the conviction had entered her mind that he spoke the truth, and that his days were numbered.

Claire, followed by Julia, returned, bearing in her hand a small open basket lined with fresh green leaves, on which some luscious-looking peaches were placed. These were offered with a grace that was all her own, and while they peeled and ate them, the conversation became general and animated. The look of care passed for a season from the old man's face, and he spoke and laughed as gaily as the others.

Mrs. Courtney at length arose to go, and she smilingly said to Thorne:

"I waive my invitation for a few days, Mr. Thorne, but on Thursday I shall expect you to dine at the Grange with M. Lapierre and his daughter. By that time you will be sufficiently recovered to drive over, and I will send my carriage for you. In the meantime, I will restore your portfolio to you if you wish it, but I shall be glad if you will leave it in my possession till you can reclaim it in person. I should like to copy some of the sketches it contains, for one of the resources of my solitude is a fondness for drawing."

"You will only honour me too highly, Mrs. Courtney, by using anything my portfolio contains. If you will select such views as you prefer, I will with pleasure make a duplicate of them for you during my stay in the Happy Valley. The only use I have for my productions is to give them to my friends, and I shall be but too happy if you will permit me to class you among them."

"Many thanks; with such a bribe as that, of course I will consent," was the smiling reply, as she extended her hand in farewell.

Thorne pressed it respectfully, and after kissing Claire, she went out to her carriage, attended by M. Lapierre. It was a low-hung pony-phæton, which she usually drove herself, with the attendance of a young boy. As she gathered the reins in her hand, she spoke in a low tone to M. Lapierre.

"Make every effort to rid yourself of the fantasy that oppresses you; for such presentiments often bring about their own fulfilment. In any event, remember that Claire will be safe under my guardianship."

"I am quite certain of that; would that I could do as you advise; but I feel that the decree has gone forth, and I can do nothing to change it. Let us not refer to this subject again; but remember my words; the twenty-fifth of August will rise on Claire doubly orphaned."

"I wish you could be induced to think otherwise, or to forget to number the days as they pass."

"It would make no difference; the result would be the same," was the grave response; and unwilling to tell him what she thought of his hallucination, Mrs. Courtney gave a sharp cut to her ponies, and rapidly drove away.

With slow steps M. Lapierre returned to the house, to find his daughter standing beside the sofa, with her hand clasped in Thorne's, and her averted face alternately flushed and pale with emotion. She was saying:

"You must not talk to me in this strain, Mr. Thorne. My father would be seriously displeased, and here he comes to speak for yourself."

To the surprise of Claire, M. Lapierre only smiled faintly, and sorrowfully, as he said:

"Leave me alone with our guest, my daughter; I have something to say to him, and afterwards I will speak with you."

Thorne relinquished the hand he held, and Claire fled from the room like a frightened fawn. She sought the seclusion of her own retreat, where she threw herself into one of the large chairs, and burst into a passion of tears.

But they were not tears of sorrow; for when she wiped them away, a smile of tender triumph wreathed her rosy lips, as she murmured:

"He loves me—he loves me! This noble, handsome hero would win me to be his, though I am but a simple, untutored child. Oh, joy! oh, happiness! But what will my father say to him, I wonder! Ah, he cannot—he will not, refuse to listen to his eloquent pleadings."

At that moment M. Lapierre was listening with extreme gravity to the passionate avowal of undying affection for her made by her lover. Since Walter Thorne had so precipitately made up his mind to make Claire his own, at all hazards to his future prospects, he determined to carry things with a high hand. He persuaded himself that so advantageous an offer would not be lightly declined by the impoverished old Frenchman; and if he insisted on an immediate marriage, he could himself name the day that would give Claire into his guardianship.

M. Lapierre listened in utter silence till he had fully expressed his wishes and intentions, and then quietly said:

"My daughter is very dear and precious to me, Mr. Thorne; yet I am surprised at the violent passion you express for her, seeing that a week ago you were not aware that such a being was in existence. Such sudden prepossessions are apt to resemble the torrent that bore you into our valley. If you will look from the door you will see that it is now exhausted, and ripples in a thread of silver over the rocks; and I greatly fear that such may be the history of your sudden penchant for my child. Should it prove so, think what her fate would be, if I permitted you to win her inexperienced heart."

Thorne listened to him impatiently.

"Have you so completely forgotten your own

youth, M. Lapierre, that you can make no allowance for the impetuosity of mine? I may have been precipitate in my declaration, but I am deeply in earnest. I love Claire with a fervour that cannot lessen; she is my first love, for I have never felt the slightest preference for any other woman. Give her to me, and I will make her happy. I swear it to you. I shall inherit wealth. I can at once place her in a better position than the one she now occupies, and she shall share all I may ever possess. I entreat you to yield to my prayer, and let me claim her as my own without unnecessary delay."

The sallow face of the father flushed, as he haughtily replied:

"I cannot surrender my daughter to a stranger of whom I know nothing, except that he has the bearing and education of a gentleman. I must know something of your past life, Mr. Thorne, before I consent to receive you as her suitor, and I must have the absolute certainty that she will be received by your friends as the daughter of Armand Lapierre should be, even if she brings no fortune to her husband. Are your parents both living, and if so, will they be likely to regard with approval the disinterested marriage you are so ready to contract?"

"My mother has been dead many years, and I am the only child of my father. He is extremely anxious for me to marry; and I am certain he will gladly receive Claire as his daughter. I do not ask you to give her to me, without every assurance that I have spoken the truth to you concerning myself. I will write to L—, which is my native town, and obtain from there such vouchers of what I have stated as must satisfy you. A few weeks will suffice for that, and then you will give me my bride."

The father shook his head.

"Not quite so soon as that, my young friend, for Claire is too young to assume the responsibilities of marriage. If my scruples are set at rest, I will permit you to visit my daughter in the character of a lover; but for a year, at least, your union must be deferred. That probation will test the strength of your feelings, and enable her to understand her own. Hasty marriages are often bitterly repented; and it is my wish to save both you and her from such a fate as that. I think this is conceding enough for the present, and you must be satisfied with this arrangement."

In vain did the young lover endeavour to shake his resolution; he found M. Lapierre immovable, and he was at length compelled to yield for the time; but he trusted to the influence he would establish over Claire, to bring about the accomplishment of his wishes, long before a tithe of the stipulated year had expired.

But he talked so fairly to the father, that he had no suspicion of the treachery that lay veiled beneath his words. The tie between himself and Claire must be irrevocable before his father could interfere, and demand the fulfilment of the engagement he had been mainly instrumental in forming for him. Once safely married, Thorne believed his father's anger would be as short-lived as it was violent; and so far as the forsaken girl, whose troth he had won, was concerned, he consoled himself with the thought, that Agnes Willard was cold and proud, and she would soon reconcile herself to the faithlessness of the man who had never been an ardent wooer to her. She had fortune, and lovers in abundance would flock around her, when it was known that she was again free to be wooed and won; and he felt sure that any one among them would render her far happier than he could.

Even if she suffered from his inconstancy, Thorne determined to cast compunction to the winds, and go steadily forward on the path he had marked out for himself, cost what it would to himself or others.

At the close of their conversation, M. Lapierre said:

"When the letters arrive confirming your statements to me, Mr. Thorne, I will permit a formal betrothal to take place between yourself and Claire, if she wishes it. Such is the custom of my country, and it is one that has never been disregarded in my family. It seems absurd for one, in my humble position, to speak thus, perhaps, but until my day the name I bear was a time-honoured one. We were a generation of bankers, known before the Rothschilds were ever heard of. Our house has had transactions with many dynasties of kings; its head has controlled the finances of France, and made war or peace according to his willingness to unloose his purse-strings. But all that grandeur passed away with the elder branch of the Bourbons. Lapierre and Son sunk with the revolution, to rise again, however, under the rule of Bonaparte, to a faint semblance of their former greatness in the financial world."

"My father established a bank for the people, and we prospered on a smaller scale than before. When I was old enough, he took me into the firm, and for

many years all went well with us. But after his death, misfortune came; one I trusted proved negligent, another treacherous, and—but it matters not how it happened—the old house fell, to rise no more; utter ruin to myself was the result of our disasters; but no taint clung to my name and the creditors permitted me to go upon my way. I chose an asylum in this country, and here I found the mother of Claire. The Courtnays were distantly related to her, and that is how I came to settle in this obscure valley, contented to win my bread by imparting to others the accomplishments which were bestowed on me as a passport to good society."

"Thank you, monsieur, for telling me this," replied Thorne. "The knowledge of it will smooth my way with my father, for he will be pleased to know that I have chosen a wife from a good family. He has some prejudices on that score, I confess. I shall be free to tell him what you have just imparted to me?"

"Yes; make such use of it as you may think fit. I could not permit my child to enter your family without the assurance that, except in fortune, she is quite equal to any one in this democratic country. I have fallen from a high estate through no fault of my own, Mr. Thorne, and I will say if my daughter can, through you, be restored to the sphere to which of right she belongs, I shall die with fewer regrets than I lately believed possible. You seem noble and generous, and I believe you will endeavour to render her happy."

The lover rapturously exclaimed:

"It shall be the business of my life to do so. I will write home at once, M. Lapiere, and in a few weeks at farthest, the replies to my letters will be here. They will give you the fullest assurance of the truth of what I have told you."

"I believe you," replied the Frenchman simply, as he offered Thorne his hand. "I will leave you now, and seek an interview with my daughter."

(To be continued.)

RED DOUGLASS.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"CARRY the chief to the lugger!" shouted Hammond. "Carry him off to the boats, some of ye! We will keep these hounds back. Carry him off, I say!"

"Yes, and his wife, too!" shouted Warner, as he brought the butt of his heavy rifle down on the head of a soldier. "Take that on your knowledge box, in memory of me!" he added, as he saw the soldier sink, mangled, to the earth.

"Bring on your governor!" he shouted. "His old friend, John Smith, wants to see him!"

And another Englishman went down before his terrible arm.

Some of the men succeeded in raising the body of the Douglass and that of his wife up.

"Carry him off, carry him off! He is not dead," cried Hammond, and then as some of the men moved back towards the lugger, which had been brought in towards the shore, he and Warner and a few more struck wilder and more fiercely than ever, among those who were pressing upon them.

Hand to hand and foot to foot, the conflict went on, the band falling fast, but not faster than those with whom they struggled, but slowly and surely one object was being attained. The body of the Red Douglass, as well as that of his unconscious wife, was carried back towards the shore of the bay, where the lugger was now being drawn, for Walt Grème could see the struggle that was going on, and was hurrying to join in it.

Sir Henry de Mortimer, in the excitement forgetting his usual prudence, rushed to the front of the fight and shouted:

"Hew the Red Douglass to pieces, but do not let them get away with his body!"

"Hewing is the word, is it, governor?" cried Seth Warner, throwing down his broken rifle and snatching up a huge broadsword. "Hewing, eh—how do you like that?"

And as he spoke, he aimed a blow at the governor's head, which nearly deprived him of that very necessary appendage to his body, it being only saved by a sudden twist of his neck. As it was the governor lost a part of his nose. Again a sweeping blow was aimed by the same stalwart arm, but a random bullet struck Seth at the wrist, disabling him in a second, as far as that arm was concerned.

Then came the cry of the lugger men, as, with Walt Grème at their head, they rushed on.

Quickly the government force was beaten so far back that the body of the chief, and that of his wife, followed by old Margery, were got on board the lugger.

Then, seeing how useless it was for them to con-

tend with so large a force, Grème told Hammond, Warner, and all who could, to get aboard, and in a few minutes sail was made on board the lugger, and she was ready to stand to sea.

Maddened with the idea of any escaping, the governor shouted to his officers to turn the guns on the earthworks and upon the lugger. But this was no easy task, and long before a gun could be brought to bear upon her, the lugger, under all sail, was heaving for the narrow entrance, through which she had escaped from doom but a short time before.

Her cabin below, as well as her deck, was crowded with those who had escaped captivity and destruction on shore; and now, with stern and defiant looks, they glared back at the forces which would never have been successful, had not their brave chief, in his chivalric nature, been so merciful.

On the lugger went, a light breeze filling her sails, until her bow was cleaving the water in the narrow entrance; and then, when the first glimpse of the open sea was caught by Walt Grème, at the helm, he saw another sight, which made him sick at heart, indeed!

There, not three cables' length outside of the harbour's mouth, was an armed English steamer; while but a little way farther off, with their topsails aback, but with all their guns run out, ready for use, lay two large corvettes, their crews all at quarters.

The face of Grème turned pale as he saw this; and Tom Hammond, covered with blood, muttered a bitter curse, as he saw their chance of escape cut off when it seemed almost certain.

"Let us sink with our flag flying!" said Tom, bitterly. "The chief is dead, and his wife will die, too, with a broken heart. Let us fight to the last!"

"Ay, that I will! Double shot the guns!" cried Grème, firmly. "Boys, better a speedy death than the hulks and chains all our lifetime!"

"Ay, ay, Grème for ever!" shouted the crew; and the men sprung to their arms with that stern, calm look which is a thousand times more dangerous than boasting words or vain threats.

Grème himself drew his already blood-stained sword, and, unbuckling the belt, threw the scabbard overboard.

His men knew well what he meant by that action, and a loud, wild cheer greeted it.

At that instant Jeannie Douglass came on deck, her face flushed with excitement.

"He is alive! He will live!" she cried, addressing Hammond.

CHAPTER XL.

"HAUL down that flag, and heave-to in the lugger, or I'll sink you!" shouted a short, fat, red-faced officer, trumpet in hand, from the wheel-house of the steamer, which now lay nearly across the lugger's bows.

"Ay, ay! But don't hurry us, old lobster-chops!" shouted Grème in reply.

Then, in a low tone, he said to his helmsman:

"Lay the lugger alongside of her starboard quarter, man! Ready, boys! Ready to follow me! If we can take the steamer, we are safe yet!"

The man who steered the lugger instantly put his helm a-port, as if he intended to luff and heave-to, while another man lowered the flag from the mast-head of the lugger, at a sign from Grème.

"Starboard there! Starboard your helm, or you'll be aboard of us!" shouted the red-faced officer.

"That is just where we're coming!" cried Walt Grème, and the next instant he and his smugglers went on board the steamer in a mass.

The crew of the steamer, taken completely by surprise, made very little resistance; though, to give her red-faced captain credit, he fought as long as he could. But in three or four minutes all was over, and it was done so quietly that, as the English flag was not hauled down, the officers and crews on board the corvettes did not know what had occurred. Seeing no stir there, Grème at once conceived a plan to get clear of their fire, before they could comprehend the true state of the case.

Taking the cutter in tow, he ordered the engineer below, on pain of instant death, to start the engines under a full head of steam; and, having found the signal book in the cabin, he ran up the signal, which indicated this order:

"Stand out to sea in company!"

The order was well enough, but for sailing vessels to obey it was a difficulty, since the steamer ran out directly head to wind, a feat which no vessel under canvas alone could perform.

They, however, made sail on a wind, with yards braced sharp up, holding a course as near after the steamer as they could, wondering much, too, that she ran off under such a high pressure of steam, while they, almost becalmed, could hardly draw clear of the land.

But when, in a little while, Sir Henry de Mortimer

came off from the shore in one of the boats that had belonged there, and heard of the singular manoeuvres of the steamer, he at once conceived the true idea of the case.

Heavy guns were fired to bring the steamer to, but she was now out of range, and, hoisting the banner of the Douglass at her peak, Walt Grème boldly told the tale of his success.

Sir Henry de Mortimer almost foamed at the mouth, in his impotent rage, as he thought of the escape of his arch-enemy, the Red Douglass; for, keen-eyed in his desire for his death, he had noticed, in the struggle over the body of the chieftain, that his wound, though a bad one, bleeding profusely, was not necessarily a fatal one, for it was too high to have touched the heart, and might not have even pierced a lung.

He had broken up the rendezvous of the robbers, it was true, at a fearful loss on his own side, but their chief had not been taken, and full half of the boldest and most to be feared of them had escaped, had seized a queen's ship, and now were careering, in defiance, over the sea.

It is time that we looked after our hero, for, in the truest sense of the word, the Red Douglass was a hero.

As soon as Walt Grème had got the steamer fairly headed out to sea, and saw that she was getting out of range, he asked for the surgeon who belonged to her.

He at once answered to the call—a pale-faced, meek-looking man, when compared with the fat and fiery-countenanced captain. And, when Grème expressed his wish that the wound of the chief should at once be examined and attended to, he complied with the desire readily.

The chief had become conscious, and was gazing upon the tearful, anxious face of poor Jeannie, when the surgeon entered the cabin of the lugger, which had been drawn up alongside of the steamer, so that she could be boarded.

The surgeon, with the quickness and skill of men reared to the profession in the service, examined the wound, and, causing the chief's body to be gently raised, placed his hand beneath the shoulder blade.

"Painful, but not dangerous," he said, briefly, as he plainly felt the ball where it had lodged, outside of the shattered shoulder blade. "I will take out the lead and wash the wound, and, then, good nursing must do the rest."

"Oh, thank heaven, that he still lives! that he is yet left to me!" murmured poor Jeannie, as she heard these words.

And she turned her head away, but held his dear hand pressed in her own, while the surgeon extracted the bullet, and dressed the wound of her husband.

Fortunately the hæmorrhage, at first very great, had slackened of itself from coagulation; and though weak, the chief was perfectly conscious, and, as yet, suffered but little pain. For such wounds are never, or at least very seldom, painful at first; it is only when shattered bones begin to reunite, that the nervous system begins to know the intensity of agony.

As soon as the wound was dressed, after asking the surgeon if it were safe to let the patient think and advise in matters of intense interest, and receiving for reply that now, before any mental or physical reaction was at work, it would be safe, Grème asked the Red Douglass what he should do, briefly telling him of the capture of the steamer, and the escape from the corvettes.

"Heaven is with us, outcasts though we be!" murmured the Douglass. "Such an escape is almost miraculous, yet to your undaunted bravery, good Grème, seconded by my true men, and to Providence also, we owe it all."

"But what shall we do, noble chief?" asked Grème, perplexed beyond measure. "Here we have a large steamer, with nearly as many prisoners as our own force is composed of, provisions none too plentiful, and, what is yet more annoying, only coal enough on board the steamer to last her three days."

"Enough to carry you into Melbourne?" asked the chief.

"Yes; but it would be madness to go there," said Grème.

"No," said Douglass, with a faint smile. "Go there, and release, on their parole, the men and officers of this vessel. Get provisions for the lugger; and, after disabling the steamer so that we cannot be at once pursued, release her to the government. Let those who would hunt us to the death, see that we can be merciful and generous, when they are in our power, even as we have been before. With steam you can reach Melbourne long before the corvettes can get there, and we can be at sea again in the lugger before there will be anything there strong enough to try to detain us."

"You are right, noble chief! And all shall be done as you advise," said Grème, at a moment's thought.

Then he returned to the steamer, and informing the captain of the orders given by his chief, told him that if he would give his parole of honour not to do anything to endanger the safety of any of the band, and when they had arrived at Melbourne to give no alarm, until the lugger was re-provisioned and ready for sea, he should have his freedom from restraint at once, and in the end have his steamer back again.

Astonished at the offer of such good terms, the red-faced captain swore that he would do whatever the Red Douglass wished, and with Grème's consent, he took charge of the navigation of his vessel, the sooner to get her back to port, so that the lugger might have full time to prepare for departure before the corvettes could get in. The mortification which he had felt at his surprise and capture was almost forgotten in the pleasure of his speedy release and the recovery of the ship.

Urged on by the knowledge that they would be free on arriving at Melbourne, the engineers and firemen of the steamer did all they could to give her speed, and the crew seconded their efforts, for now the best feeling existed between the smugglers and their recent enemies.

"Whither shall we steer when we go to sea again?" asked Grème of the Red Douglass, after the steamer was on her course for Melbourne.

"I have not considered yet. You shall know after I have had time to think!" was the reply.

CHAPTER XLI.

WALKING to and fro, with her face flushed, her eyes flashing, her step quick and nervous, was the Lady Mary de Mortimer.

"Why does he not come?" she murmured, impatiently. "It is three days; yes, this is the morning of the fourth day, since I sent a trusty messenger to the Red Douglass to warn him that my father had learned where he was, and with an immense force would attack him. I asked a token that my message had reached him. The messenger has not returned. Perchance he has played me false and revealed all to my father. Idiot that I was not to go myself. For him, for that noble chief, I would forget sex, dignity, everything! Hark—some one now approaches. It is only my maid. I know her step and her timid knock."

"My lady, there is a young man waiting in the drawing-room, who wishes to see you. He will reveal his business to none but you," said the maid who entered.

"A young man? Did he give his name?"

"He did, my lady. Augustine Lefeoine!"

"Ah—my messenger. Send—or rather bring him here at once!"

"Here, lady, to your chamber?"

"Ay, here—girl! You can wait in the next room. But be quick—be quick, I say!"

The maid never had known her imperious mistress so excited and anxious. She hurried away to obey her bidding.

In a few minutes she returned, and opening the door a young man, whose clothes were dust-covered and travel-stained, entered the room. He was handsome in face, and of fine form and genteel appearance. The lady had not entrusted her message to any ordinary person it was plain to see.

"I was but now chiding your delay, Mr. Lefeoine!" said the Lady Mary, pointing her visitor to a seat as the maid retired. "Yet I knew that to please me, you would use every endeavour to carry out my wishes!"

"I have done so, lady!" said the young man in a sad voice. "I arrived near the camp of the Red Douglass, not in time to get your message to him, but just in time to look upon the dead body of my twin brother, who fell in a desperate charge upon that camp!"

"Oh, I grieve for your loss, Mr. Lefeoine. I have seen your brother. He was a brave and gallant officer. But you say the battle was begun—had it ended ere you came away?"

"Yes, lady. The robbers have been beaten and dispersed by Sir Henry and his forces, but the loss on both sides was very heavy!"

"The Red Douglass! Was he taken—or—slain?" asked the lady quickly, trembling nervously while she awaited his reply.

"He was shot down, but whether mortally wounded or not is not known. For his followers succeeded in bearing his body to a vessel in the bay, then escaping with it, and full half of his men, to the sea!"

"Thank heaven that he is not captured!" said the lady earnestly. "My perjured father at least has not that to triumph over! Perhaps he is not badly wounded; perhaps he will live. Did you see him, Mr. Lefeoine?"

"No, lady. I loved my brother, and when I found that I was too late to attempt to get your message to him for whom it was intended, I had only eyes for my dead brother. He loved the service and panted for

glory. Alas, for the little glory that comes with death! I knew not how I loved him till I lost him."

"I grieve with you, indeed I do, Mr. Lefeoine. You have been very good to try to carry out my strange and wild wish, a wish that I would have entrusted to no person living but yourself. I know not how to reward you now. The time may come when I can. In the mean time will you not wear this for me?"

And taking from her own fair neck a chain of curiously wrought gold, she extended it to him.

"Lady, for your sake I will accept and wear your gift. But there are chains which hang heavier on the heart than gold or even iron can weigh upon the body. But I will not detain your ladyship. I am sorry that I could not bring you better news."

The young man bowed and withdrew.

"He loves me. He is young and handsome, of good family also. Yet I never can love him. No, nor any man who lives but the Red Douglass. He is a king over all other men, crowned by nature's all-ennobling hand. Who that has once seen him could ever yield to lesser nobility of face, form and being than his. Not Mary de Mortimer at least."

The entrance of the maid interrupted this soliloquy.

"You look excited, Margaret. Is there any news?" asked the lady.

"Yes, my lady, very strange news. But it cannot be true. Yet the town is full of it. Some of your father's officers were this moment speaking of it."

"What is it?" asked the lady. "Let me hear the matter which sets the town astir."

"They say there has been a battle, my lady, with the Red Douglass and the forces of your father, his Excellency Sir Henry."

"Yes; that is not news to me. What more?"

"Why, my lady, that your father got the best of the Red Douglass on the shore, and wounded him, and made him retreat, but that the robber chief and his men captured the war steamer Gipey, and have boldly come into port here with her and a lugger, and they are taking in provisions and water now in the harbour, so as to go to sea again before your father gets back!"

"Impossible! The Red Douglass here in the harbour?"

"Yes, lady, Captain Gosson of the Gipey is on shore, sounding his praises wherever he goes, for the robber chief set him and all his men free, when they were in his power."

"Just like him. I believe the report may be true; but I will see for myself. Margaret, send the captain of my father's barge here to me, and then help me to dress. I am going out."

"Yes, my lady!"

CHAPTER XLII.

WITH the rapidity which ever marks such cases, where a strong constitution hardened and rendered pure by a temperate life assists nature, the Red Douglass exhibited signs of a very rapid recovery from his wound. By the time that the steamer, towing the lugger, reached the harbour near Melbourne, he was so much better that he could sit up, propped with pillows in bed, and converse audibly with those who were permitted to approach him.

Among these was the captain of the steamer, who, surprised at finding the dreaded bandit chief so kind and gentle in his nature, expressed in warm language his gratitude for the terms of his release.

"Should you ever fall into the hands of our government, noble chief, which heaven forbid! you shall find in me, at least, one true and grateful friend. Send for Captain Gosson if ever you get in trouble, and I can be reached."

"Thank you, captain," said the chief, with a sad smile. "I shall avoid falling into the power of the government if I can. Through injustice an outlaw, I shall avoid so long as I can any farther collision with its powers. By the dawn of another day I shall be at sea, and it is not likely that interruption will occur from any one here."

"No—it cannot, for I am the chief officer on this station now," said Captain Gosson. "I will go on shore, and in person hasten off your provisions. Within about twenty-four hours the corvettes will come lumbering along, and I want you to be out of sight of this port when they arrive. But it is wrong for me to stay here exciting you. I will not say farewell, for I will come to see you again before you sail."

And the red-faced captain, bowing, left the cabin. "There is a veiled lady who wishes to see you on important business!" said Walt Grème to the chief. "She came alongside in a barge a few minutes since."

"Admit her, though I do not know what business one of her sex can have with me!" said the Douglass. "Sit here by the side of my bed, my Jeannie, there is no business which any lady can have with me which should be a secret to you."

His fond wife smiled. Her love was too pure and too strong to be weakened by that most wretched of all passions, jealousy.

A moment later, a lady, whose face was closely veiled, hurried into the cabin. Seeing only the pale face of the wounded chieftain at first, lighted dimly by the hanging cabin lamp, she threw herself on her knees by the side of the couch, exclaiming:

"Noble chief, wounded and helpless? Is it thus I am forced to look upon you again? Oh, heaven, it is hard to bear!"

"Lady Mary de Mortimer," said the Douglass, at once recognizing her voice, "it is more kind than politic for you to visit an outlawed fugitive from your father's search. Rise, I pray you, that I may introduce you to the dear wife of whom you have heard me speak, when you and your mother were my guests."

The Lady Mary sprang to her feet instantly, for until then she had not known that there was another female in the cabin. Much less had she thought of its being possible that the wife of the chieftain had been able to join him.

But casting aside her veil, she looked with her own face full of confusion, on the sweet, pure countenance of Jeannie Douglass, and she felt in a moment that she was an intruder there.

"Is this the Lady Douglass?" she asked, in a respectful tone.

"It is my sweet wife, my own Jeannie, who perilled her life to cross the ocean and join me!" said the chief, proudly.

"She is very, very beautiful!" murmured the lady, more to herself than to him, yet he heard her words.

"And as good as she is beautiful," said the chief.

"Jeannie, this is the daughter of Sir Henry de Mortimer, of whom you have heard me speak. She and her mother were for a time detained as guests of mine, when I first held the governor captive. Where is the Lady Eleanor, Lady Mary?"

"Gone to England, to serve you, noble chief!"

"To serve me?" exclaimed the chief.

"Yes, months ago she sailed, to let the Queen and her counsellors know how nobly you acted, while you had the power in your hands to do much evil. It was her intention to bring back a pardon, so that the Douglass could proudly come back into a society which he is so well fitted to adorn."

"Had I been guilty of crime when they sent me here, a pardon might have been looked upon as a gracious boon," said the chief. "But to the innocent a pardon, for a crime never committed, is only an insult."

"True, noble chief! But once free, through a pardon, could you not go back, and make efforts to prove your innocence, which I have never for an instant doubted?"

"Yes," said the Douglass, after a pause: "But the friendship of your mother has given her hopes which will be vain. The enmity which forged the evidence that made me a convict, is too strong yet to be conquered. The gold and estates once my own are now arrayed against me. I do not look for justice from man. It can come only from heaven."

"And from Him, dear husband, rest assured, it will come, all in His good time!" said Jeannie, gently.

"Bless you, darling, for the hope!" said the Douglass, with a faint smile. "But I am overtaxing my strength. Jeannie, attend to the Lady Mary as an honoured guest, and see that she has refreshment before she departs. I must rest."

The Lady Mary sighed. But she could not object to this kind and evidently necessary dismissal. And, though she envied that sweet wife the love for which her own soul so wildly yearned, she dared not think, even then, of invading the rights which belonged alone to her.

So she withdrew from the cabin, and, declining the proffered refreshment, was about to return to the shore, when, glancing seaward, she saw a sight which told her that the chief was again in a peril from which escape would, indeed, be difficult.

(To be continued.)

PRICE OF PROVISIONS NINETY-SIX YEARS AGO. —At the present time, when eggs and other provisions are very dear and scarce, the following extract from an account book for the year 1773, kept by the housekeeper of a gentleman living in the neighbourhood of Bawtry, may not be uninteresting:—"November, 1773—Pigeons, 11d. the half-dozen; butter, 8½d. per lb.; rabbits, 1s. 2d. per couple; chickens, 1s. per couple; oatmeal, 1s. per peck; cod, 4d. per lb.; cockles, 2s. per peck; apples, 1s. 8d. per peck; eggs, 2d. per score; veal, 3½d. per lb.; beef at 3½d. per lb.; mutton, 4d. per lb. In June of the same year geese were selling at 8s. the couple, ducks at 1s. 2d. the couple, and eggs at 1d. per score."

LILLIAN GASTON.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON dashed Bess, and as she came to a curve of the road, the sagacious creature pricked up her ears and gave a joyful neigh. As if Bess could meet one of her stable friends and not say "good morning!" A louder neigh came in response. If Bess knew Black Roger was coming, Black Roger was gallant enough to respond promptly. But the riders, with instincts far less subtle than these dumb creatures, knew nothing. Lady Fitzgerald, with drooping head and downcast eye, swept around the turn of the road full upon Arthur Yelveton, also riding listlessly, with a heart oppressed with sadness.

Bess and Black Roger manifested their delight by curvetting and whinnying, but Lady Fitzgerald and Arthur Yelveton sat silent, staring at each other in dumb amazement. Her ladyship was the first to recover speech.

"Safe—safe! Oh, Arthur, you are safe! Now I can bear anything!"

And then, overcome by the sudden reaction from her intense alarm, she lost entire command of herself, burst into tears, and sat trembling like a leaf in the saddle, her face so deadly pale that Arthur, expecting every moment to see her fall, sprang down and hurried to her side.

"You are ill, Lady Fitzgerald," said he, at an utter loss to comprehend her agitation, or her words. "Where is your attendant, that you are here on this lonely road alone?"

For a little time she could not speak, but as soon as the faintness and giddiness left her, she said, wistfully:

"It is not their fault. I would have no one with me. Do not blame any one but me."

"Blame! What right have I to blame Lady Fitzgerald?" replied Arthur, hastily. "But what could bring you here, evidently so ill and unfit for the ride?"

Her ladyship put up her gauntleted hand to loosen the silken scarf tied around her throat, for it seemed that the conflicting emotions of pride, mortification, and glad relief would strangle her.

"It is of no consequence now. I will go back," faltered she.

He gave another keen glance into her agitated face as he asked:

"Are you sure you are able to sit in the saddle?"

"Quite able." And the first tinge of colour drifted into her cheek, as she withdrew from the support his arm had given her.

He bowed in silence, went back to Black Roger, and, mounting, guided him to her side.

They rode only a short distance, when they saw John hurrying forward at his quickest pace. He pulled up abruptly, with his face all aglow, as he saw her ladyship's companion.

"Oh, Mr. Yelveton! it does my eyes good to see you. Then it's all a hoax, that horrible story of your being half killed, and a leg amputated, and all that. Her ladyship didn't go all the way to Thaxton Close, did she?"

Arthur Yelveton understood the whole now, and though his heart was bounding tumultuously, he answered quietly:

"Yes, John, I am safe and sound, thanks for your solicitude. You may ride on, if her ladyship be willing, to inquire for Mr. James Monkford at the house at Thaxton Close. I wish to hear the surgeon's last report. It was he who was injured, and I found him, which accounts, I suppose, for my name being mixed up in the matter. I will attend her ladyship safely back to Poplar Reach."

John received his mistress's nod of acquiescence, and rode on. Lady Fitzgerald, colouring deeply beneath the dark eyes fixed gravely on her face, pulled impatiently at her rein. They rode on in profound silence for a little time, and then the lady, warm, uncomfortable, and half angry, broke it by asking:

"Is it Mr. James Monkford (the author) who is injured?"

"Yes, your ladyship; and my absence has been owing to the accident. I obtained help, and we got him to Thaxton Close, and there I left him in the surgeon's care, and went for his wife. Lady Fitzgerald, amidst all the sorrow and anguish of this past night, I have seen that which has made me bless heaven. I have seen a true and perfect wedded love; the peace which rested upon his haggard face when his wife crept to his side; the holy, fervent devotion of hers, which restrained her anguish and terror to give him all possible comfort, was inexpressibly beautiful. The house, too; such peace, joy, and thorough confidence dwelt in it, as realized my fondest visions. Yes; there is such a thing as perfect wedded love. I thank heaven that

I have seen it; and more than ever I abhor and detest the sham and mockery with which the majority of people go to the altar."

Lady Fitzgerald's hand trembled as it dropped the veil to hide her quivering lips.

"Yes," repeated he, with still more bitter emphasis, "more than ever I feel how wrong and sinful, in the sight of heaven, it is for a woman to bind herself to any man, however worthy, if he does not hold her heart's fondest hopes and truest devotion. How it is tempting Providence, drawing down upon herself all the sorrow and disappointment such a union must bring to her, losing the golden bias to which she has her inborn claim."

His voice shook with its suppressed passion, and presently he added, gravely:

"I wish it had been my fate instead of his; that is, if he must die. The world can ill afford to lose such a man. And that home!—I could sacrifice my own poor, desolate life a dozen times, to save that home for a bright example to the world."

"Do you think he will die?" asked Lady Fitzgerald, in a timid voice.

"I fear it. I see that Dr. Wharton is very much alarmed."

Another silence. Lady Fitzgerald was still struggling with her agitation. Her companion kept his eyes fixed on the ground, his face grave and stern. Suddenly she flung up the veil, and turned upon him her beautiful face, her eyes wet with proud tears, her lips quivering like a grieved child.

"Arthur Yelveton," said she, "I, too, have had my lesson, and I shall profit by its teachings. I have looked into the very depths of my heart to-day—almost, it seems, as if I had also looked into the very grave itself."

She drew off her glove hastily, and held up to him the fair white hand.

"See," said she, "it is free from Sir Richard's ring. It shall never wear that of Anson Wharncliffe. It shall know no fetter, except—except the king whose royal throne is in my heart shall put one there."

And when she finished, Lady Fitzgerald dropped the veil again, to hide her crimsoned cheeks.

Arthur Yelveton's face was kindled into a beauty she had never seen before.

"Lady Fitzgerald, now, at last, I can honour you as much as I love you," said he, simply. "I thank heaven for what you have said, believing that you mean it all. Not because of my selfish jealousy of Mr. Wharncliffe, but for your sake, who will not stoop from womanhood's loftiest heights, who will keep yourself high and pure."

"Is that all he will say?" questioned Lady Fitzgerald's heart, almost angrily. "When I have betrayed so much, will he give me so little in return?"

But Arthur Yelveton went on telling her about the Monkfords, and did not allude to anything personal again. Poor Lady Fitzgerald tried to answer cheerfully, and seem interested, but her heart sank heavier and heavier.

As he lifted her from the saddle, at the great stone steps of her beautiful and stately home, he murmured:

"And so you thought me dying—possibly dead? Did you give a pitying thought to the hapless fate of your faithful servant?"

"You are cruel," answered the lady, reproachfully. "You know—you have made me show you all my thoughts. Perhaps you despise me for this unwomanly confession."

"I never honoured you so heartily and thoroughly, never one half so much as now!" returned he, impatiently. "But still, Lady Fitzgerald, you are proud, and—so am I!"

As he spoke the last word, he bowed and turned towards the group of servants, who came hurrying out with their congratulations upon his safety.

"Unkind! ungenerous!" murmured Lady Fitzgerald, angrily, and she hurried to her chamber, locking herself away from her maid, her father, and even little Dick, while she relieved her tortured mind with a flood of bitter tears. But she wiped them away, and smiled brightly.

"Perverse as he is, I admire him the more. He is indeed my hero, my lord, my king!"

Anson Wharncliffe presented himself that afternoon, and was mortified, astonished, overwhelmed, to receive a calm, grave refusal of the new ring he had brought to her.

"But, Lady Fitzgerald," said he, "this is very strange, unexampled. What have I done to offend you?"

"Nothing whatever, Mr. Wharncliffe. It is only that I have discovered I was about to offend myself. I confess that you have been ill-used, but not so much, Mr. Wharncliffe, not half so much as if I should marry you. Remember that, and be contented."

"But it is impossible for me to be contented. I am sure you have heard something. Some envious

rival has slandered me. Lady Fitzgerald, you must hear me. You must marry me!" exclaimed he, with desperate energy.

"Must, Mr. Wharncliffe?" said her ladyship, arching her neck haughtily. "That is a word which has no place in this question. You know I warned you when you were here before, that I was still free."

Anson Wharncliffe sat biting his lips nervously, while his active mind was running swiftly over the whole subject, and looking out for the best course for him to steer, under this new dilemma. He made his decision promptly.

"Lady Fitzgerald," with a grave authority in his manner which opened her eyes to a new phase of his character, "I said must, not, heaven knows, from wilful authority, but yet from a thorough understanding of the subject. I had hoped to save you from a painful disclosure. I meant to shield you with my love and care from all knowledge of this wretched secret. Lady Fitzgerald, you are haughty in spirit, you are justly proud of your high position, your fair fame, your unaltered name. Can you bear to have them all swept away from you?—to stand, or fall, rather, from your proud height, in sight of all the world disgraced? You are proud of your child's noble heritage. Will you let it be snatched away from you?"

"Mr. Wharncliffe," exclaimed Lady Fitzgerald, indignantly, "are you mad?"

"Would that I were, Lady Fitzgerald! Little enough you guess what black disaster I have been warding off from you—what ruin I have held at bay!"

There was such deadly earnest in his look and tone, she could not believe it was all imposture.

"What is it?" said she. "Some unforeseen disaster—the property swept away? Well, we can bear it. We have been living on a comparatively small income. Poplar Reach certainly is beyond any such disaster."

"Property!" repeated Mr. Wharncliffe, with a tragical clasp of the hands. "Oh, if it were only property!"

The lady opened those great eyes of hers.

"Mr. Wharncliffe, you choose to be enigmatical. What else can it be? Dick is safe and well. What other trouble can there be, able to touch me?"

"Hear her! hear her!" exclaimed he, wringing those white hands of his. "Lady Fitzgerald, do not ask me anything farther, but as you value your own happiness, and little Dick's future peace of mind, give me a husband's power to avert this danger, while it is possible!"

"What danger, Mr. Wharncliffe? I insist upon a full explanation, or I will not hear another word you have to say."

She turned upon him angrily, magnificent in her haughty pride.

He gave an earnest glance into her face, to see if she could bear a sudden thrust, and then spoke, slowly and deliberately, every word coming like an icy dagger:

"Lady Fitzgerald, there is a man hereabouts with positive, incontrovertible proofs that Sir Richard had a legal wife living when he married you!"

The haughty form trembled, as if it had been of snow and a fiery breath had passed over it. She dropped into a chair, and put out two trembling hands.

"No, no! that is too horrible. I will not believe it. He wronged me enough without that. How dare you say such a thing to me, Anson Wharncliffe?" And she raised her drooping head, revived by an intense feeling of anger and indignation.

His hypocritical face was full of profound compassion and tenderest sorrow.

"Lady Fitzgerald," he said, with grave dignity, "you forget that I did not wish to say it; that you insisted that I should do so."

"I beg your pardon. But it is an imposition; it is impossible, utterly impossible. Where is my father? I will call him, and he will send for our lawyer."

"Stay, stay, I implore you! or you will draw down the ruin you dread, beyond any power of removal. Do you think I would tell you this, if I had not weighed every proof, sifted every word of evidence?"

She sank back into the chair from which she had risen with haste, and looked at him drearily.

"There is no doubt at all," he continued, his deliberate speech making his words doubly impressive. "I knew myself of his secret marriage, but I believed the woman dead; or I should have warned you, even though I had drawn upon myself the reproach of acting the part of a jealous, alighted lover. I hope that Sir Richard also believed her dead, but she was not; she came here with her child into this vicinity, and only died about a twelve-month after Sir Richard."

"With her child!" echoed Lady Fitzgerald; "a wife and child! Great heavens! what, then, are we—poor little Dick and I?"

"Lady Fitzgerald, hear me. The woman is dead, has been in her grave these five years, and only one

man holds the proofs. I have watched him, snared him, foiled him thus far—for your sake, Lady Fitzgerald—because it would kill me to see you thrust out before the world dishonoured, your child without his father's name."

"Oh, mercy, mercy!" exclaimed the proud woman, shuddering from head to foot. "It is too much. I cannot bear it."

"You shall not. Give me a husband's power to act for you, and all is safe," answered he, eagerly.

"Are you deceiving me? Man, have you a friend's heart, and are you planning this to entrap me?" asked she, fiercely.

Anson Wharncliffe caught up a gold-tipped Bible and pressed it to his lips, while he answered:

"It is heaven's truth; I swear it to you, Lady Fitzgerald. The woman's name was Lillian, Lillian Gaston."

She started at the name, and wrung her hands.

"It is true. I know it now. He called her 'his blue-eyed Lily.' I read his letters. Oh, what have I done to deserve all this? Is it the last blow to crush my final pride?" she exclaimed, wildly.

"Dear Lady Fitzgerald, be calm, I beseech you!"

"Lady Fitzgerald! Why do you call me so? It is a hateful name to me!" she answered, fiercely.

"You shall not keep it long. I will save you from all these tormenting evils. Dear Euphemia, do you see now why I could not marry me?"

She passed her hand across her forehead.

"No, no, not that! With all the wrong, meet I give the deepest pity!"

"For Dick's sake. Shall he be an outcast, a nameless child? Oh, you will not doom him to that. Tell me you will accept my hand and the help it gives."

"Why do you wish it—a ruined, dishonoured woman, who has already refused you twice?" she asked, suspiciously. "I do not understand you."

A dull red came into his cheek, which had shown signs of pallid exhaustion through the interview.

"Because, Euphemia Wilcox, I am and was I have loved you, and only you!" was the low reply.

She covered her face with her trembling hands and moaned:

"What shall I do? Oh, what shall I do?"

"Accept the aid offered you. Why should you hesitate? A month ago, knowing nothing of this, you were willing to accept my hand. How can you hesitate now, when it brings you safety from all this ruin?"

"How, indeed? It is madness for me to hesitate, is it not?" she replied, dreadingly.

"Utter madness," answered he, a gleam of satisfaction coming across his eyes.

"I think I shall marry you. I am not strong enough to brave such a tempest. And for Dicky, my darling, my precious, for him, whom we have educated for all these honours, to be thrust forth, a target for the world's scornful glances! No, no! I cannot bear that. Yes, there is but one way; I must marry you."

"Then you promise—you give your solemn promise this time?" he asked, with a feverish eagerness.

"Not yet. I am dizzy; my mind is unsettled. I must have time to think it over. And you—you will give me proof that Dick is safe?"

"Every possible proof. And you shall have until to-morrow night for your decision. If you prefer, confide everything to your father. I know well enough what his advice will be. But it will be a disagreeable knowledge for him, and the fewer who share, in my opinion, this wretched secret, the better. But I think I may count securely now upon your promise."

"How can it be otherwise?" murmured she, dreadingly. "But I must have time to recover from this shock."

"I will come again to-morrow night." And when he said it he shuddered, as if some sudden remembrance had recurred to him, and without recovering his composure, he raised her hand to his lips and said good-night.

Lady Fitzgerald went off, only conscious of one feverish desire, to find her boy and hold him close. He was with Yelveton, seated on his knee in the library, listening to his explanation of some illustrations in the great book open on the table before them. The latter looked up with a cheery smile, but put the child down hastily, and pushed the easy-chair towards her, at the first sight of her colourless face.

"Lady Fitzgerald, you are ill; you have had some terrible blow."

"You are right," answered she, mournfully; "a terrible blow, indeed, which takes away everything but Dicky. I want my boy, Mr. Yelveton."

Arthur Yelveton was not the man to annoy anyone with ill-timed questions, least of all this woman whom he loved so devotedly, and yet so hopelessly. He saw that she was suffering from some severe mental trial,

and he only desired to soothe and calm her. He put the boy into her arms, watched her clasp him to her breast, and shower her wild kisses and still wilder tears over him, then took his station at the door to keep off all curious eyes. When he heard Dick crying, he went back to them.

"Mamma is so strange!" wailed Dick; "and I am tired. I want to see the rest of the pictures."

Arthur Yelveton took the boy into his arms, and the book also, and went hastily up to the nursery, and gave him into the care of his nurse. When he returned to the library, Lady Fitzgerald still sat there, with those dry, burning, despairing eyes, and that white, white face. He looked the door, and came towards her, and knelt down before her.

"My darling, my darling!" said he; "what is this trouble? What is my life for, if it be not at your service? Let me help you."

She looked at him with a pitiful smile, and dropped her head to the strong arms upheld towards her.

"For this once let me be woe!" whispered she. "I love you, Arthur—oh, I love you! and I must marry him."

"Must! Lady Fitzgerald, who shall dare me that word in your case?"

"Lady Fitzgerald! Oh, Arthur, my wife is in the dust. I have no right in the name. I shall go mad if I do not commit in some one. Arthur, if there be help, you will find it for me. I will tell you all, if my lips can articulate the shameful story."

Arthur Yelveton, holding her to his breast, heard the new development. His face was pale and grand in its mighty wrath.

"Oh, my darling, my queen! that you should have borne this indignity!" he muttered through his clenched teeth. "You have done well to tell me. If there be relief, I will find it."

"And if there be not?" asked she in a low whisper.

"I dare not think of that," answered he.

"I know what you mean—for Dicky's sake, I must sacrifice myself," was the mournful answer.

"And if I find any escape, a single loophole," he returned, "you are mine!"

She smiled through all her misery at the very thought, and bending towards her, he kissed her. It was the first kiss; each heart was asking dreadingly, was it the last?

CHAPTER XIV.

ANSON WHARNCLIFFE was somewhat nervous as the twilight deepened, and the evening gloom descended, and crept into the luxurious little parlour of the western verandah. He seemed, however, very gay in spirits to his household. He gave the butler strict orders to come at a certain hour after dusk, to make a report of the household affairs; he talked, as, indeed, he had done for a fortnight, about a strange man hanging around the place, and gave directions that the plate should be locked securely in the safe.

"There's no knowing," he said in explanation, "but that this fellow who has talked so wildly to me is not shaming insanity, for the sake of getting a chance to steal. There's no harm in being on your guard. If he troubles me much more, I'll have him taken care of, let him be whom he may."

And then he went to the window, and looped away the curtains still farther, even set the French window ajar, and returning to the table, he lifted up a handkerchief and glanced at the pistol lying there, and smiled, a cold, deadly smile. There was no faltering in his purpose, not an instant's wavering.

"The proofs secreted where no one else can find them, the child ignorant, and his secret shared with none! What can be more propitious?" he repeated, exultingly.

Meanwhile, in the graveyard, in the humble corner which held Lillian Gaston's grave, a still, quiet figure was waiting, and vainly. Gaston, or Oliver Orr, had learned patience in a hard school, but at last he rose to his feet, muttering:

"There must be something detaining him. I'll take a look around the house, as he told me. It is a trouble for me to leave my work again to-morrow night."

And so, carefully scanning the figure of every person he met, he took his way to the house, which he had marked before. It was easy reaching the designated spot, for he found a side gate wide open, and the shaded grounds shielded his approach from observation. The windows at right of the verandah—they were easily found, too, and the looped curtains showed him plainly Anson Wharncliffe engaged with a visitor.

"Sure enough," muttered Gaston, "he's kept by company. It's no fault of his, then, that I've waited so long; he hasn't broken his faith. I'll wait till that pompous-looking man has gone. I'd rather, by far, have met him at the graveyard. But I can't see any harm of going in there. I said I'd give him one chance more to make atonement, and I will."

So he leaned up against a tree, where he could keep watch of the well-lighted room, and waited patiently. Now and then he withdrew his gaze from the luxurious room, and looked up into the heavens, clear and bright with stars. His thoughts went far back, sorrowfully, penitently, with heart-felt remorse, to the past, then returned to the present, and was warmed and cheered. He meant to do his duty faithfully now, without any shrinking on his own account. He was sure of that, and somehow he seemed to have found a comforting assurance, that heaven accepted his repentance, and forgave the old sin. He thought of Lillian, lying in her grave, and sighed bitterly; he remembered Lily, in a happy home, soon to be restored to her rights, and smiled through the twinkling tears.

And now Wharncliffe's visitor rose, bowed his adieu, and departed. Gaston stepped forward promptly, and tapped upon the window, saying, in a cautious voice:

"It is I, sir. Shall I come in?"

Wharncliffe nodded, and, as Gaston thought, took up his pocket-handkerchief, and then came a little way across the room to meet him.

"All right," said he. "Do all things remain as when I saw you last?"

"Exactly the same," returned Gaston, eagerly. "Are you going to help me?"

"Yes," answered Anson Wharncliffe, the handkerchief still in his hand, his voice strangely husky. "I am going to help you—this!"

While he spoke, the handkerchief fell to the floor, the shining deadly tube was bared.

Gaston must have had a second's warning, an instantaneous consciousness of the treachery intended, for his right hand was thrust into his breast, and, at the very moment the fatal bullet sped upon its deadly errand, with his last expiring effort he drew out his dagger, and clutched it with a death-grip, then fell headlong, prone upon his face, at the murderer's feet.

The moment he perceived that his work was accomplished, Anson Wharncliffe shouted for help. It came, both from without and from the household. A squad of police, just going to relieve those who kept guard over the mills during the strike, heard the pistol-shot, and the cry for help, and came dashing up the walk, through the French window, just as poor Gaston had come, and rushed upon this scene. There was the elegant room, with its rich furnishings, and there was Anson Wharncliffe, pale and excited, but yet self-possessed and cool, the pistol still in his hand. And there, prone at his feet, the dagger in his hand, lay the man who, of all the world, best knew Anson Wharncliffe.

"Oh, if you had only arrived a moment before!" exclaimed the master of the house, in sorrowful tones. "I was obliged to fire, to save myself from his dagger. Can you tell who he is—where he came from? We were talking about him only a little while before. We could not determine whether he was really insane, or prowling around for robbery."

The butler came rushing in, pale and affrighted, and corroborated the story; and in a moment there were half a dozen more to give the same explanation.

"Look at him! Lift him up, I beg of you!" said Wharncliffe, apparently more and more distressed. "If only you might find signs of life! Poor wretch! poor wretch! I would mine had not been the hand to send him to his rest."

They raised him up carefully. Life? No, not the faintest beating of the pulse, by this time. Anson Wharncliffe was a sure shot; the ball had gone through the heart. One of the men made an effort to take the dagger away, but the fingers were clutched like a vice around it. The dagger that had not left him night or day was then to accompany him to his grave.

"Of course you will have an investigation?" said Wharncliffe, in a melancholy voice. "I will vacate this room."

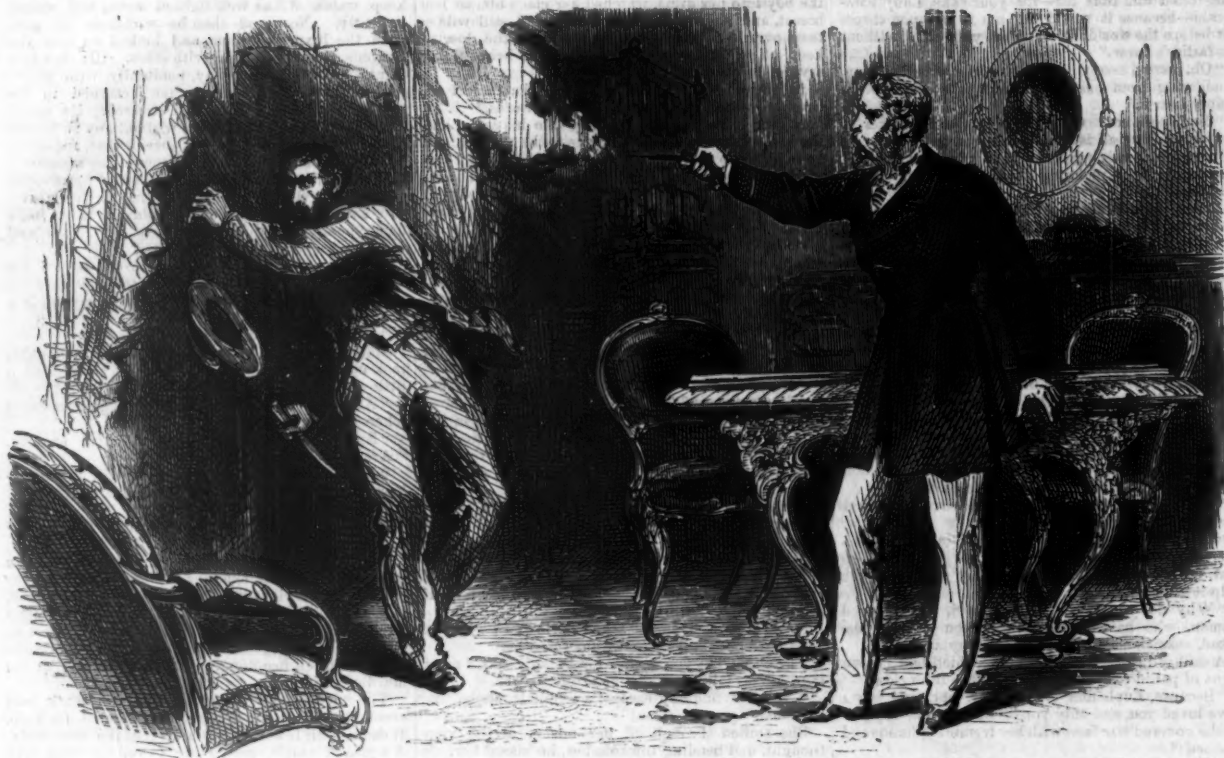
"I don't see that anything but a coroner's inquest is necessary. But they can decide. You say he rushed in upon you with the dagger drawn? Of course there is no doubting your story. The dagger itself is the best witness. Who knows anything more about him?"

"No one that I can tell of, except Lady Fitzgerald's man, Wilson. He frightened them exceedingly, some time ago, in the churchyard."

"Well, we'll bring the coroner, and he'll see to the affair. There's no chance for blaming you, sir."

"I did not apprehend any, of course," returned Wharncliffe, pensively; "but it is very unpleasant, very unpleasant."

Soon the coroner came, and Wharncliffe, sorrowfully interested, lent all his assistance towards finding out the man's history. But it was enveloped in mystery. All that was known was, that the man had worked a short time in the neighbouring



[THE DEAD SHOT.]

town at a factory, where his reticent manner and mysterious habits had excited remark among the operatives. For the rest, all was left in doubt. His pockets gave no light at all. There was only an old leathern wallet, with a few guineas, a child's Sabbath school card and a pocket-knife, besides the dagger still grasped in the cold hand. Anson Wharncliffe had watched the whole examination, and he drew a long breath when it was ended.

And so all the little ripple the event made, was the careless report that an escaped lunatic had rushed into Anson Wharncliffe's room at night, and been shot by that gentleman in self-defence; a wonderful escape for the gentleman!

Dame Higginson heard of it, and wondered carelessly, until the sexton assured her it was the same man, Gaston, who had hung so strangely about the grave in the pauper's corner, when her interest was aroused.

"What had he done with the child?" she asked.

"Killed the poor little thing as like as not. There's no doubt but the man was crazy," returned the sexton, in his most positive tone. "I gave in my testimony to that effect at the inquest," he added, as if that statement set the seal to the matter.

But Dame Higginson was of a more inquisitive nature. So the man who knew that pretty woman, and took away her child, was dead, killed by Anson Wharncliffe? What enmity had he against Wharncliffe? She shook her head a little, and was not so easily satisfied as the rest of the world. Nevertheless, it was not for her to make investigation, or draw attention to the circumstances of the case. She had certain remembrances of a gold watch, a diamond ring, and a locket set in pearls, which, despite her poverty, poor Lillian Gaston had clung to, and hidden away, even under her dying pillow. What if raking up the subject brought inquiry for these? Dame Higginson was not anxious for such investigation, and so, although she kept her eyes open, she allowed her lips to remain closed. Wharncliffe rode by her cottage one day, and reining up his horse at the door, talked with her.

"The sexton tells me," said he, "that unfortunate man came here, and took away a child you had been kindly caring for. Can you tell me anything about him—of his history, or of the whereabouts of the child? Of course, it is natural I should wish to make all reparation in my power. I would gladly do something towards the support of any relative I might find."

Dame Higginson shook her head.

"It's little I know, sir. The mother was a pretty little thing, but she was as close-mouthed as an

oyster. I can't give you a bit of light. He took the child away, and said he was her uncle. That's all I know about it, and I hain't seen nor heard a word from her since."

Anson Wharncliffe drew a long sigh, but he did not blind Dame Higginson's keen eyes to the fact that a glow of satisfaction diffused itself over his face. However, he tossed some silver into her hand, and she bowed him away from the door.

Yes, Anson Wharncliffe believed himself safe, and congratulated himself that all things had worked so auspiciously. He had not seen Lady Fitzgerald since the night previous to Gaston's death, although he had been up twice to Poplar Reach. He did not think it strange, however, for Dick was ill, and they told him her ladyship would not leave him, night nor day. Only a slight attack of croup, the nurse said; but her ladyship was so fond, and so easily alarmed, she made a great matter of it. He pencilled a few lines on a card, and sent it up to her, and the same card came back to him, with these additional lines:

"You must not ask me to think of anyone, or anything but Dick. When he is well, you shall have your answer promptly."

And Wharncliffe was fain to be content with this; but, meeting Willoughby, he could not forbear giving that gentleman a hint of the powerful lever in his hands, in return for the pompous old aristocrat's haughty coolness. And, hinting a little, it was not so easy to retreat without revealing more.

Mr. Willoughby's consternation and distress considerably lowered his haughtiness, and before the interview was ended, he went so far as to promise the gentleman that there was no question about it. Lady Fitzgerald would marry him. Anson Wharncliffe believed him, and smiled triumphantly. He said it over to himself again and again, "Lady Fitzgerald would marry him!" The woman who had once rejected him so haughtily, the proud, beautiful woman about whom he had dreamed all these years, for whom he had planned, waited, bided his time, and risked such desperate ventures, was to be his at last!—she and her rich possessions all his! His heart leaped and bounded. There was even a sort of proud admiration of his own masterly cunning, his cool, shrewd diplomacy, mingled with his jubilant satisfaction. No ghostly hand laid its warning touch upon his shoulder; no filmed, glassy eye stared menacingly upon him; no dead face confronted him. Poor Gaston slept peacefully in his lowly grave—which, after all, was in sight of that other mound he loved so well—and came not forth from his shroud to haunt his murderer.

"All things are secure. I shall marry Lady Fitz-

gerald," said Anson Wharncliffe, and knew not that the hand which clutched the dagger with the wooden handle, the strange, clumsy dagger, which had not left poor Gaston, even in his death-struggle, had done its work, even after death; had wrought his atonement for him.

All this time the intense solicitude and occupation of mind, induced by the dangerous illness of James Monkford, had prevented the family interested in Gaston from wondering at his absence, or concerning themselves about his fate. None of them heard the story of the wonderful escape of Anson Wharncliffe from the attack of the insane man; but if they had, would never have dreamed of connecting it with the idea of their humble friend.

Mr. Monkford still lay at Thaxton Close, vibrating between life and death. Lily was there also, to be at hand if, in an interval of consciousness, the sick man should ask for her. The sweet, unselfish thoughtfulness of the child, her patient, noiseless watch at the door of the sick room, her overflowing love, which was pleased at even a catch at Mrs. Monkford's dress, and was content and happy over a hasty kiss or tender message, won upon the hearts of all who knew her, and gave her as deep a hold upon Mrs. Monkford's affection as her own child could have obtained. Nevertheless, Mrs. Thaxter was not quite ready to approve when Master Ted exclaimed, one day, in the fervour of his boyish enthusiasm:

"Lily is just the biggest darling that ever was! She is sweeter and better than any other girl who ever lived, and if she will only like me, I'm going to marry her!"

"Oh, Ted, you foolish boy! How can you think of such things? You'd better be looking over your Latin," returned the lady mother. But when the boy had gone out, she turned to her husband with an anxious face.

"I am not sure, Alfred, but that such things are oftener determined at his age than we suspect. It is plain the child is his ideal of perfection. What a trouble it may be to us by-and-by! These children grow up so quickly!"

"Well, I suppose Ted must marry some day," returned her husband, carelessly.

"To be sure. But such a *mésalliance* as this! I should never consent to it!" replied the lady with emphasis.

The time came when Mrs. Alfred Thaxter remembered this remark, and blushed for it, and was thankful her rather satirical husband did not recall it to tease her with, or to prove some of his notions, which she called absurd and revolutionary

(To be continued.)



[AMY DEFENDS HER CHOICE.]

HONYCHURCH ROOKERY.

CHAPTER VI.—continued.

SHE was lost in deep thought, and scarcely heeded the import of his speech.

"I am glad to have this opportunity for a long talk; I have been wishing for it for some time, Ray. You know how keenly I am interested in you; how much I have always cared for you. I wish you would speak freely and tell me your plans."

"My plans?" replied he, in some surprise.

"For a settlement in the world, you know. Your studies are all ended, as far as teachers can help you. What have you decided upon?—a profession?"

"To tell the truth," replied Ray Gilbert, a little nettled at her cool business-like tone, "I have not yet considered the matter."

"But you surely have some wish. Which way lies your taste?" she said, eagerly, "to what profession?"

The indolent coxcomb shrugged his graceful shoulders.

"I haven't much fancy for either, or any. It's a great mistake I wasn't born rich."

There was a bright expression in her eyes, and she spoke quickly.

"But you will be rich some time or other, Ray."

"Thank you for the prophecy. If it comes, I shall enjoy it—say, for instance, a house like this, and a mistress of the house as beautiful and elegantly attired as you are. I think I was born with a keener enjoyment of such things than most people. My parents must have been fastidious and luxurious people."

She caught her breath a little nervously.

"But I wish you would try and think. It is a man's place to select some work and aim. Women must wait and meekly accept what comes to hand, but a man can choose and carve out his own destiny. I want to help you in the matter. How do you fancy following in Mr. Gilbert's steps? He spoke of it the other day, that there was room for you in his office."

"That dry, musty, intolerable law!" ejaculated Ray Gilbert.

"Medicine, then? There are many great and honoured medical men," urged she, in a wonderfully meek and patient voice.

"To be running about at the beck and call of every old woman! Horrible!"

"But you will not like the pulpit?"

His laugh rang out musical and clear.

"Just fancy it, Miss Anderson. Can you trans-

form me into a meek-faced, solemn-visaged minister in a white neckcloth and black gown?"

Miss Anderson's sigh floated off in his laugh, while she said, coaxingly:

"But what will it be then, Ray?"

"Sure enough," said the young man, ingenuously, "what will become of me, loving my ease and luxuries so well? If you would only marry me yourself, Miss Anderson," he said, suddenly, fixing his bright dark eyes on her face.

She tried to bear it unflinchingly, but there was a little gasp in the breath, a stern clenching of the lip, a quiver of the eyelid, ere she replied, calmly:

"You are insane, Ray. Do you know how old I am?"

"I know that you always exert a subtle fascination over me—that you are incomparably beyond the young ladies I meet."

Miss Anderson's two white, pretty hands were locked across her heart. She scarcely raised her eyelids at all, while she replied:

"You shall have my fortune, Ray, and marry Amy Atherton, and I will always remain your true and faithful friend."

"You are too generous," exclaimed Ray, even his selfish heart touched by a white pallor on her face, suggestive of stifled anguish.

"Have you spoken to Amy plainly?" asked the lady, presently.

"I don't think I have. But it is well understood. I think there is no question about her sentiments."

And he smiled complacently.

"No, I suppose not," answered Miss Anderson, with another sigh, though her glance was full of proud admiration, as it wandered across his graceful figure and handsome face. "But you ought to speak to her. There should be no uncertainty whatever."

"Then you won't take pity on me yourself?" said he, looking into her face with a curious enjoyment of its evident agitation; "would it be hopeless for me to try to win your love?"

What a colour arose to the pallid cheeks! How the lips crimsoned till they were almost of as vivid a glow as flowing blood. And beneath the lowered lashes the eyes shone brightly with passionate tenderness. He saw the purple lines under the delicate nails of the clenched hands clasped across her breast, and marked well the strained, agonized chord in the voice which answered:

"Ray! Do you think I am a woman to make myself a laughing-stock in the sight of all the world? Do you think, though there were no other impediment, I would give people a chance to say, 'There is a poor silly woman who has cheated

herself into believing it is herself, and not her gold, which has won a husband young enough to be her son?'"

"Why care what the world says?" said Ray.

She turned upon him, almost choked by contending passions.

"Ray, Ray, don't you love Amy Atherton? Don't you care for her at all?"

"I don't know. To-night, here in this room, I am half bewildered. I am only thinking how handsome you are, Miss Anderson."

She rose hastily from her seat, and began pacing to and fro, the rich golden satin folds of her dress trailing behind her on the carpet. When she came back to him her face was calm again.

"Ray," said she, "I like you very much. You know it, or you would not have dared to speak to me in that way. I think I am the best friend you have had in the world, ever since you were a boy. You were a pretty, winning child, and Mrs. Gilbert brought you here very often. I learned to love you then, and have never changed since. I have, as you know, no family ties of my own. I have no wish or desire to marry, and somehow all my aspirations and hopes have been given to you. I wish you to have this fortune of mine, and there is but one way for you to win it. I am glad she is a good and pretty girl, this little Amy. I want you to marry her, and be happy; and yet I shall be inexpressibly thankful, if you do not let her drive me from your affections. I grasp greedily at the faintest straw which shows that you have any admiration or affection for me. Oh, never, never be cold and careless towards me! It is so little, so very little, that you can give, at the best. But you are to marry Amy. Yes, I see by your eyes that you think this is an extraordinary speech. And it is. But I am an extraordinary woman, and you must make allowance for that. Ray, Ray, I would die here at your feet, before I would lose your affection or your respect."

"As if that were possible!" said the young man, even his selfish nature touched by the smothered passion of her voice.

And he took the white jewelled hand and kissed it twice. She gave a slight nervous shudder (it was the right hand), and drew it from him.

"And now, Ray, I think we understand each other and are content."

"I suppose I ought to be," answered Ray, dubiously.

"You know I give you my solemn promise to remain unmarried. Then the fortune must go to Amy, and you will marry her. I will have her here as mistress the very moment she is your wife, and you

are both to live with me—with me always," she continued, eagerly.

"I'll speak to Amy to-morrow," replied he, promptly; "that consoles me, if I am to see you here always. You will wear that dress for me, won't you, when we come to this room?"

Miss Anderson smiled graciously. And congratulating himself upon his importance and golden prospects, Ray Gilbert took his leave.

Miss Anderson stood just as he had left her, with closed teeth, motionless eyes, and down-falling arms. Then suddenly she flung herself passionately upon the floor, the golden satin crushed heedlessly, the arms stretched forward as if to grasp some help and support, and the white anguished face pressed to the carpet in a wild abandonment of grief.

"Oh, I cannot bear it, I cannot bear it!" cried she. "It is killing me to crush down this wild yearning for him—this terrible secret is killing me. I long to fling myself at his feet, to rain my wild tears, my passionate kisses upon him. Oh, Ray, Ray! if you could only understand! But I will not tell you! No, I will never tell you. You look up to me now. I can see it. I saw before you as some grand, powerful, superior nature. Let me hold the place while I can. You must marry the girl, but if she wins your thoughts away from me, I know that I shall hate her."

She lay there grovelling in anguish, then sprang suddenly to her feet with a short, bitter laugh.

"This is a new role for Serena Anderson! Follow! I am nervous and foolish. Shall I shrink now? Shall I yield to weakness at this late hour?"

She went to the salver, poured out a glass of wine and drank it hastily. It was becoming a habit with Miss Anderson now, to steady her nerves in that way.

CHAPTER VII.

THE taxidermist made his appearance in a few days. A very different looking man from the former occupant of the cottage by the lake, or, as it is called by the villagers, Honeychurch Rectory. The hermit had worn long gray locks straggling down his neck, and a venerable beard. His garments, too, had been of primitive fashion—a long, loose coat of dark woollen cloth, a tunic of blue flannel, belted about his waist, and a wide-brimmed straw hat, had usually been his attire when hovering around the banks of the lake, or strolling along the pastures.

Max Steinberg, as he gave his name, was not only a younger looking man, but of entirely different appearance. His short, closely-cropped hair was glossy and black as the raven's wing. He wore a jetté moustache, and his brisk, cheery manners were in as marked contrast to the shy, retiring habits of the hapless hermit, as his jaunty shooting costume and velvet skull cap were at variance with the former's costume.

"You are welcome to the cottage," said the owner of the lake pasture, with a smile, in answer to his application; "and I shall consider it a favour if you live there peaceably, and redeem the suspicious name the place has acquired."

"Parbleu!" answered the taxidermist, speaking with a foreign accent, and shrugging his shoulders. "I fear not molestation for myself. Who should wish harm to such a poor fellow as me? and surely no robber could expect booty among my stuffed birds and reptiles! I take the place with thanks. Yet will I procure one strong lock for the door, and my gun shall be charged always."

And, whistling merrily, he went his way to the cottage. He had it presently transformed into a cosy habitation. The floor was covered with matting; one side was filled with shelves, the other had two respectable engravings, one a scene on the Rhine, a village in the distance, which every one took to be the native place of the taxidermist, because the only time that his eye grew grave and wistful was when it turned that way. It soon became a chosen resort for the villagers, especially the young people, who found the romantic walk fitly culminating in the small room, swiftly filling up with interesting relics that no one else had dreamed of looking for. He had fitted a tree in one corner, and as fast as his specimens were obtained, they were mounted upon it. There they were—looking, every one, so true to life it seemed that at any moment the heterogeneous flock might lift their wings and fly away—from the tiny wren to the heron and crow, some in the attitude of flying, some picking at the tiny wing, and others with open beak, just in the act of devouring a carefully preserved beetle, or a great gold-powdered moth. There was also a limb—the especial delight of the ladies—trimmed gaily with everlasting flowers and red rosebuds, on which fluttered every fairy-winged butterfly that had ever been seen in the place, and a great many more, indeed, than the oldest inhabitants suspected as regular summer visitors. The collection grew swiftly, and

every day the attraction thither increased; for Herr Max as he called himself once, and thereby set the example for all the rest, was always ready to give a welcoming smile, and it was a bitter disappointment, especially to the children, if they came thither and found the door locked, which happened frequently, since so much time was necessarily required in collecting his specimens. He found it out after a while, and had certain hours, like any lawyer or physician, when he made it a duty to be ready for visitors. The owner of the cottage was especially delighted with him, and chuckled over his success, in dissipating the horror which had enveloped the place. People forgot to shudder, even when they came down the pasture along the bank, in the very shadow of the white cross which marked the grave of the murdered hermit, and sometimes passed it by and never heeded it at all. Not perhaps, without reason, for the taxidermist had planted a luxurious vine in the rich mould at its base, and carefully trained it to cover the arms of wood. Only on his own side, however; that which faced the lake gleamed out as white and startling in its bareness as a first.

CHAPTER VIII.

A few days afterwards there was an aristocratic party at the taxidermist's. Miss Anderson had visitors, and they had expressed a wish to see the romantic spot, and the good-natured hero of the town. They were roved across in a gilded pleasure-boat, and landing, found a group of young people collected around the cottage door.

Conspicuous among them, as, indeed, he always was wherever he went, was Ray Gilbert. Miss Anderson beckoned to him, he was proud to obey the summons, and transferred himself from the ordinary group of townspeople to the elegant circle of aristocracy.

Yet Miss Anderson's penetrating eye saw a cloud on his forehead, and was not unmindful of the tiny point on Amy Atherton's pretty lip.

The taxidermist stood in his doorway, and bowed his acknowledgment of the honour vouchsafed to his humble dwelling. Miss Anderson scarcely looked at him, and indeed seemed a little nervous and anxious to avoid any direct encounter with the taxidermist; for while the others entered and admired the fine collection, going into raptures over delicately-tinted butterflies and fairy birds, their stately hostess lingered on the bank, gathering up her trailing skirts from the grass, and swinging the costly Parisian toy which served her for a sunshade. She drew Ray Gilbert aside, and asked, earnestly:

"What is the trouble between you and Amy, Ray?"

Ray curled his lips.

"The young lady chooses to be capricious. I will not coax her, but let her play her game out. I fancy she is a little ashamed of it already."

"I do not understand you. Is it a mere lover's quarrel? Somehow, there is a defiant look on her face which I do not like."

While she spoke, her eyes wandered to a group of young girls, among whom Amy stood. At that moment Charlie Croyton came in view, turning the row of alder bushes which fringed the banks.

Amy saw him, and almost unconsciously to herself a glad light flashed into her eyes, a rich, warm glow broke over her face. She was in the mood to betray the sentiment, and walked to meet him, with a proud, defiant glance towards Ray Gilbert.

The latter bit his lip. His vanity was most susceptible of any sentiment.

"Confound that base-born meddler!" muttered he. Miss Anderson gave a scathing glance towards the pair.

"Do you mean that she has any thought of him?" exclaimed she, in a tone of intense wrath.

Ray could not bear to acknowledge to Miss Anderson, of all others, the mortifying repulse his suit had met.

"He is trying his best, at all events," answered he, with an attempt at carelessness.

The hand, daintily gloved in pale primrose, was clenched so wrathfully that the delicate skin split the whole length of the palm. She held up the hand—it was her right—and glowered at it a moment with a lurid look in her black eyes, which made even Ray Gilbert shrink. Then with a contemptuous laugh, she tore it off, and flung the glove over the bank into the water; after which, she walked deliberately across the open space between them, and took Amy's hand in hers.

"Come, my little Amy," said she; "why are you wasting your sweet presence in this desert?"

The freezing, contemptuous glance fell upon Charlie Croyton, yet seemed to ignore his presence. Amy did not move.

There was a little closer compression of Miss Anderson's scarlet lips, an icier gleam of the chilly

eye, and then she spoke in a tone of grave authority.

"Come over to your proper sphere, child. Do you not know that a woman who stoops is undone?"

It was Charlie's eye which flashed now. Her meaning could not be mistaken, and it sent the hot blood tingling through his veins. He clenched his hand in impotent wrath. It was a woman, and there was no redress; but was unto the man who had dared to stand within reach of that brawny arm, and give such a thrust!

Amy's loyal heart sent the angry blood seething into her cheek. She dropped a strenuous courtesy.

"I beg you to excuse me, Miss Anderson, especially as you have such good company yonder. Charlie, dear, I want you to show me that crow's nest you told me about."

And turning around with her back rudely to the great lady, brave little Amy slipped her hand into Charlie Croyton's arm, and said:

"Come, Charlie, I never enjoy walks with other people as I do with you."

Miss Anderson stood still a moment, then walked slowly back towards the cottage. Amy, trembling in every limb with angry excitement, drew Charlie away towards the bank, and glanced nervously at his face. It was a little paler than usual, and filled with wistful sadness.

"Amy," exclaimed he, passionately, "my brave, generous little Amy, is it true that I shall drag you down? Should I take my place here in this grave under the trees. It would kill me to know you would have to be so many such thrusts as that for my sake. Have I been selfish and ungenerous?"

"Nonsense, Charlie," returned Amy, the tears coming into her eyes. "Don't mind that disagreeable, haughty, aristocratic woman. She is bound up in Ray Gilbert, and has been telling tales, I suppose. I don't see why she should marry him herself. I never knew she was quite so hateful."

"I understand her affections," repeated Charlie, his heart almost heaving; "but if a man does his best, and does bravely what he cannot help—"

"Your worst is better than Ray Gilbert's best. Don't think any more about it. I tell you I am proud of your love, that I will not give it up for forty fortunes," interrupted Amy, impetuously.

"My own precious Amy! No, no, you will not repent. In the sight of heaven I feel myself able to make you glad and happy, to cherish you with the fondest and most watchful care! Oh, Amy, I will make you happy!"

"Of course you will. Have I not perceptions of my own? Do I not have good reasons for admiring your chivalrous, generous cherishing of your mother? Think of her trials, and see what a cheerful face she wears notwithstanding all the sadness of the past. Then look at my poor, worried, tortured, burden-bound mother, with her worn, aged face. Do I not see wherein lies the difference? Charlie Croyton, I choose to be your loving, happy wife, and no other man's cowering slave. And now consider the question settled; I told Ray Gilbert the same yesterday. I am going to let all the world see that I prefer you above any other. I want you to tell your mother of it."

"And your father?" queried Charlie.

Amy caught her breath a little nervously, but returned, stoutly:

"Yes, and my father. I meant to tell him this morning, but he was in a bad humour, and poor mother looked so frightened and distressed, I let him go away from the breakfast-table without saying a word. I have despised myself for a coward ever since."

"You are no coward. You are the bravest, dearest, sweetest little heroine—"

"Now, Charlie, you needn't be foolish." And Amy's grave face was dimpling again in smiles.

Beneath the tall oak before the door, Miss Anderson was furtively watching them, her face growing sterner and darker. She drove it away, however, with a careless smile, as the gay party came fluttering from the cottage.

"Oh, Miss Anderson, why don't you come in and see? He is such an agreeable man, your taxidermist, and the collection is really a treasure. But I dare say you have visited him a great many times."

Miss Anderson did not contradict the assertion. The party of townspeople were also taking leave. Among them was Mr. Bradley, the coroner. As she saw him a sudden gleam leaped into Miss Anderson's eye. She glanced again at the couple in the distance, and a cold sneer flitted across her lip.

Slowly, and evidently with the utmost carelessness, she sauntered to the cottage-door, and glanced within. The taxidermist was stooping over a hawk he had been mounting. Mr. Bradley answered Miss Anderson's nod of recognition by coming to her side.

They talked some little time on casual themes,

and while she talked, the lady drew figures on the ground with the sunshade. Presently she moved a little nearer the door, and more to the right of the building, running her novel pencil in wavy lines, to make a vine. From out the little crevice the ivory nib sent a little strip of tinkling metal, and flung it almost to the feet of the coroner.

Alert and watchful always, and especially at this place, Mr. Bradley darted upon it.

"Why, what is it?" questioned Miss Anderson, with a clear, rich laugh.

It was a narrow strip of German silver, with a little fine tracery for border, and two neat holes for screws. There were also letters, initials, rudely traced with some pointed instrument, but clear and distinct, "C. C." and the number, "61,280," stamped evidently with a branding iron.

"It looks like the marking-plate of a cane or umbrella," observed the lady, indifferently. "How long has it lain there, I wonder?"

"It is the marking-plate from a pistol," answered the coroner in a suddenly fierce tone, "and it has lain there unnoticed, since the night of the hermit's murder."

Miss Anderson turned her horrified eyes upon him.

"You don't mean it! Oh, how you frighten me, Mr. Bradley. And to think I should have discovered it."

"It is a providential revelation!" said the coroner, solemnly. "Now we are likely to get at something we can follow; 61,280. To find a pistol with the other portions bearing that number."

"What were the initials?" asked Miss Anderson, peering fearfully into the hand which still held the fatal evidence. "C. C. They are a little peculiar," added she.

Mr. Bradley groaned. "Oh, Charlie Croyton! Charlie Croyton!"

"Good heavens! you don't suspect any one in the town?" whispered Miss Anderson.

"I am forgetting myself!" said Mr. Bradley, recovering his wits. "I have no right to call names on mere suspicion."

"I should be sorry to think it was him, though I am very angry with him," went on Miss Anderson, musingly. "It is really unprincipled and wicked in him to try to cajole and win over a simple, innocent girl like Amy. But then the poor squire's will throw the snare around her. Yet he knows the bitter opposition of her friends, and that she is really engaged to another. Oh, it is shocking, such early depravity. Mr. Bradley," added she, suddenly waking up from her abstracted manner, "don't follow up the clue. And oh, don't bring my poor, little innocent sunshade into the affair."

While she spoke, she moved a step away, and transferred the silk and ivory toy from the right hand, which had held and guided it to its important discovery, to the other whose dainty glove was still intact.

Once again she stretched out the slender delicate member, and stood looking down upon it with that same singular glowering, that mingling of exciting pride and icy horror. Then she joined the group gathered before the cross. Her visitors were hearing for the first time the story of the murder.

The taxidermist came out, and hovered in the rear. His voice made them all start, when he broke in upon their conversation.

"It's a singular and odd coincidence, that the vine I planted to cover the cross will only grow on this side. Do you see, not one leaf or tendril creeps over the side towards the lake?"

All went round to examine, even Miss Anderson, and she placed herself in a direct line from the cross to the distant windows of Lakerville, glanced from one to the other, and put forth that white, shapely right hand, a-glitter with diamonds and rubies, with a nervous shudder, as if to cast it from her.

But she was again herself when she drew Ray Gilbert aside, as the remainder of the party were seating themselves in the boat, and demanded of him exactly what Amy Atherton had said to him.

He was terribly loath to answer, but her imperious eye bade him, and he told the truth.

Amy had declared that she loved Charlie Croyton, and meant to marry him.

Miss Anderson laughed contemptuously.

"She is a little idiot. Nevertheless, Ray, you shall marry her," she said, and walked majestically into the boat, shook out her fleecy skirts, spread her sunshade, and entertained her visitors by her brilliant spirits all the way across the lake.

Meantime Ray Gilbert, thoroughly disturbed from his usual complacency, walked slowly back from the boat-landing, towards the group of young people waiting for Amy Atherton, who still lingered in the background, talking earnestly with Charlie Croyton.

"Go and bring Amy here, Mr. Gilbert," said a laughing maiden. "Tell her we are going home, and

shall leave her to walk alone if she keeps us waiting much longer."

Ray shrugged his shoulders.

"If she chooses such company, leave her to enjoy it. For myself I am not over-particular, but I really cannot stoop so low as that."

"Amy, Amy!" called out Fanny Drake, a pert, giddy maiden, secretly a warm admirer of Ray Gilbert, and a fervent aspirant for a place in Miss Anderson's coterie.

And as Amy and her companion moved slowly towards them, she added, with a toss of her head:

"It's all Amy's fault that we have that man at our heels. I for one protest against it."

"Why, Fanny," retorted a generous companion, "you know that Charlie Croyton gains every one's respect wherever he goes."

"I side with you, Fanny," exclaimed Ray Gilbert, raising his voice as Charlie and Amy advanced, so that he knew very well they must hear his words.

"I agree with you entirely that there is a limit to all things, and that we owe it to ourselves to keep out all unworthy, base-born interlopers from our circle. If Amy must choose such a companion, let us leave her to walk her way alone."

As he spoke, he put himself by Fanny's side, and led the way swiftly in the path towards the village. Fanny was only too flattered and delighted. She gave an imperious gesture to her younger sister, who followed with her escort. The rest hesitated a moment, and looked at each other dubiously. They were sorry to grieve Charlie Croyton, but not yet ready to incur the displeasure of Ray, the lion of the young men, the favoured guest of the great house at Lakerville. They stood vacillating a moment, then followed the others. Ray Gilbert cast back a triumphant glance, and exulted inwardly.

"Miss Amy is well punished. I fancy she will be less capricious when I see her again."

Amy stood a moment, following them with angry, indignant eyes, hardly daring to glance into her companion's face, for she knew he comprehended the whole movement.

His face was deadly pale, and his eyes flashed, but he spoke sorrowfully:

"Oh, Amy, this is but the beginning. Do not go any farther until you have counted the cost."

"I do not care for them. I despise and detest them!" cried out Amy, vehemently. "If all the world stood on their side, and you were here alone, I should stay with you."

"Heaven bless your generous heart! Oh, Amy, may you receive such a reward as you deserve. For myself, their shafts fall harmlessly. I can throw them off as I would a child's pelting arrow. As soon as you have spoken to your father, I want to take you to my mother. My darling! if only I might save you from the trial of that interview, when you must brave, I fear, the most bitter anger."

"I am able to bear it," answered Amy, "and I have the consolation of knowing that my mother's blessing follows me. But it may not prove so grave an ordeal as we anticipate. You know how terribly alarmed I was. It has all blown over, though I never hear any allusion to the fatal affair, without feeling as if my face betrayed the most palpable guilt."

"Yes, I suppose it is all ended, though I cannot understand it. I certainly wonder that more active measures have not been taken. It is a terrible mystery. I get bewildered trying to fathom it—to detect a motive."

"Don't talk about it, pray. I don't allow myself to think of it. I am only thankful that the excitement has died out."

Little dreamed either of them how speedily and threateningly the revival of that excitement was coming.

CHAPTER IX.

SOMETHING like three weeks from the day of Mr. Atherton's dinner-party, the taxidermist might have been seen—while the early dew yet hung on the foliage, scattering its pearly shower over him as he brushed along—walking swiftly over the pastures, disappearing presently in the blue green shadows of the cedar grove.

He had his gun on his shoulder, his game bag swung at his back, and the never absent specimen box was buckled around his waist. Nevertheless, he paid no attention whatever to the stir of life amidst the waving branches, the clear, joyous call of birds, the buzz of insect, or the flutter of broad-winged butterfly taking its morning sip from the freshly-opened flowers. With eyes downcast, and lips set gravely and thoughtfully, he strode on until he reached a little cluster of trees standing on a rise of land overlooking the Croyton farm. Here he paused, leaned against the trunk of a tree, and eyed sharply the open pasture before him, across which ran the foot-path used by Charlie Croyton and his young appren-

tice, as they went to and fro from the farmhouse to the shop.

The village was hidden, nestled in the valley below, and there were but three other farmhouses in sight, from whose chimneys the white columns of smoke curled upwards in snowy wreaths. The taxidermist looked long and wistfully towards the brown roof of the Croyton farmhouse, and sighed more than once, with none of that cheery brightness on his face which the townspeople seemed to think its inseparable trait.

Presently his eye caught a glimpse of two figures coming through the gate. He knew Charlie Croyton's straight vigorous form even at that distance, and guessed that the short stout boy lagging behind was the apprentice. He watched them along the pasture, half-smiled as Charlie vaulted over the bars; and when they had disappeared from sight he drew a long sigh of relief.

"They have gone," said he, aloud.

And, shouldering his gun, he went swiftly forward towards the farmhouse, making a great deal of noise as he opened and closed the gate.

Mary Croyton, in her neat calico dress and spotless collar, her smooth, glossy hair, and meek, pensive face, came to the open door and looked out. The taxidermist set his gun against the gate-post, took off his cap in a respectful bow, and came forward.

"I have been wandering in the woods, and am faint. Might I be so bold as to ask for a glass of milk?" said he.

Mary Croyton's eye had taken a swift observation of his person. "The taxidermist, who draws so many visitors to the cottage, without doubt," commented she, and answered aloud, in her sweet, steady tones:

"Certainly. I can give you coffee, if you prefer it. My son has just taken his breakfast, and gone to the village. Walk in, please."

He threw off his game-bag, and came in at once, glancing around the neat, inviting kitchen, almost feeling a pang at its cheery home-look.

"I beg you not to allow me to intrude. I reside myself but a short distance from here," said he, sitting down in a chair, and trying to steady his brain from the whirl of agitating thoughts which rushed upon him.

"Yes," answered Mary Croyton. "I knew you at once. You are so famous in the place, that one might recognize you without ever having seen you before. I hear wonderful stories of your birds and butterflies. I am quite proud of the honour of this visit. You must really allow me to give you a breakfast."

As she spoke she went quietly backwards and forwards, dusting the crumbs from the snowy tablecloth, setting the coffee-pot over the fire, and peeping once or twice into the oven. The taxidermist followed every movement, although he seemed absorbed in the landscape spread out from the window before him. She went out of the room to a little milk-room in the rear, and he heard her voice in conversation with the girl at work there over the butter.

As he listened, this man, who called himself Max Steinberg, brushed his hand across his eyes, and two scalding tears fell upon his cheek. The hospitable woman returned with a bowl of cream and a tiny pat of fresh butter, set a plate on the table, a silver spoon into the cup and saucer, and turned to him, her blue eyes lighted up with pleasant enjoyment at the novelty of the occasion.

"I am so glad I baked a chicken-pie for Charlie to take for his dinner. Now I have one all ready for your breakfast. Come and sit down now."

The man could scarcely refrain from falling down at her feet, but he rose, stumbled forward, and managed to get into his seat, for all his blinded eyes.

"You are too generous, madam. Do you serve every wanderer who comes in this style?" said he.

She laughed cheerfully.

"Many wanderers do not come this way, nor care for milk or coffee. They go to the village and ask for poison. Shall I give you the cream? or, perhaps, you will prefer to pour it in yourself?"

"No, oh, no! Let me have it all from your hands. You may well imagine what a treat it must be, this orderly breakfast, and dainty-laden table, with a neat-handed lady to preside. We men are such bunglers at our best."

"Yet I hear about the admirable neatness and graceful arrangement of your cottage."

She helped him bountifully, and went away for an extra addition of jelly. While she was lost in the depths of the closet, her guest dropped his knife and fork, and stared about him like one in a dream. Nevertheless, he did justice to the meal. He took care to do that, knowing it was the best reward for her kindness. But at length he turned away from the table, and, despite his best efforts, his voice was husky as he asked:

"Are we safe from intrusion, kind lady? I have a word for your ear."

Mary Creyton arched her neck, and looked at him as haughtily as it was possible for one of her meek spirit to do.

"Sir," said she, making a movement towards the door.

He gave a deprecating gesture.

"Wait a moment, I pray you. I was in Australia a long while—I was the intimate friend of George Livingstone. He told me to seek you out—to give you a message."

It needed no more to detain her. Mary Creyton sank down in the nearest chair, and turned her blue eyes upon him, wild with anguish and grief.

"I heard his story. I came here prepared to be angry and harsh in my rebuke; but, madam, dear madam, you have disarmed me. There is a cruel mistake; it is not in your nature to be so hard and pitiless with him."

"Hard and pitiless!" echoed Mary's indignant voice, and then she fell into a wild burst of weeping.

Her companion trembled from head to foot, sharing her distress and grief.

"I found, to my surprise, that you had even ignored his name; that no one in the town seemed to know of your relation to him. Everything, in fact, is so different from what he imagined, that I am puzzled."

"You knew him—you were with him!" wailed Mary Creyton. "Oh, did he never repent the cruel desertion of the mother of his child? Did he send me no repentant word—no message of tenderness to the one who gave him her whole heart—who bore, uncomplainingly, the scorn and contempt of the world for his sake? Had he no love left?"

"Good heavens! madam, if ever there were a man whose whole heart was given to a woman, it was George Livingstone!"

She wrung her hands, and her wet eyes flashed.

"Look at the circumstances. See me here, dishonoured in the sight of the world. Look at my boy, who dreams not of his father's identity, and dare to tell me that!"

"Madam," said the taxidermist, in a stern, wrathful voice, "there has been mischief made between you. I guessed it before. I tell you a truer-hearted, more passionately-loving husband than George Livingstone never breathed. He wept his tears of anguish at your very name. Of all the rest of his miserable experience, this only had power to reach his heart—that the woman he adored turned away from him in scorn, refusing to share his exile, to soothe his sorrows."

"Turned away from him!" repeated Mary Creyton, slowly; "why do you mock me?"

"Let us talk no more thus blindly. I can tell you just what diabolical toils wound around him, for he told me everything. It was a secret, his union with you, because his uncle favoured another, and he wanted time to gain his consent. He acknowledged with bitter remorse that that was his first, but, he declared, his only wrong to you. Yet he meant it kindly. He was sure he could trust to his uncle's generous kindness, if only he were able to convince him of the folly of the other alliance. And some one who feigned the truest friendship urged him on. Then came the woful quarrel with young Raymond, who was desperately jealous of poor George, and who insulted him in every way that opportunity allowed him. It seemed he had followed George, and witnessed your frequent meetings. George was sure that he suspected the truth, and was stung to frenzy by it. Raymond did his best to bring about a quarrel, but only when he flung out hints against you, succeeded in goading the poor fellow into anger. Well, that miserable day came. Raymond was more unbearable than ever; and George, in a towering passion, turned upon him, and uttered those threats, before half a dozen witnesses, which were used afterwards as such potent weapons against him. Do you know the rest? I find utter ignorance in the town; no one seems aware that it was Raymond's death which sent George Livingstone away—a murderer and vagabond on the earth."

"I know," groaned Mary; "was it not that the terrible story might be hidden for ever, that I consented to endure this shame—to forego my claim? I promised her that no one should dream George Livingstone was father to the child that was soon to be born into such a cloud of misery, if only his father might go free of this woful crime—if he might be spared the judgment of the law."

"Ha! I thought so!" exclaimed her listener, springing to his feet; "poor George! poor George! The same evil agent came to both. Listen to me; George Livingstone was guiltless of Raymond's blood. The hot-headed boy fell by his own rash fury. He struck at George, there in the woods, with the butt of his gun, forgetful that it was charged,

and dropped dead at his rival's feet, shot by the ball from his own gun."

Mary Creyton stretched both hands upwards, while the tears poured down her face.

"My heavens, I thank thee!"

"Hear me still farther. That same fiend was at hand, rushed forward lamenting the youth, and accusing George of having murdered him. His indignant refutation was met by the scathing declaration, that nothing would make the world believe it. That she herself had been drawn thither by the angry voices, his threats, the peculiar relation between them, all would be black proofs which no one would disbelieve. Stunned and bewildered, George took the evil advice. He hurried away, only meaning to remain until the worst had blown over, and then to return and confess everything to his uncle, and take you before the world as his wife. He dashed off a frantic, hasty letter, and gave it to those crafty hands for delivery. A speedy answer came to his hiding-place; a letter, in your handwriting, which drove him to madness. You heaped pitiless, burning reproaches upon him; you refused to hear another word, or take another look from one who had become abhorrent, detestable, hideous in your eyes. Be still, dear madam; I know you never wrote it. Oh, if poor George could have believed it! Stung to madness, George took the first ship for Australia. Yet with coolness came the desperate hope of your relenting. He wrote twice, six times in all, at different intervals, but never, never a word came back from you. She wrote several times, with hypocritical professions of sympathy and friendship, representing you as hard and obdurate, and his uncle severely angry. What wonder the poor fellow drove deeper into the wild sierras, and goaded by the restless anguish within, made no pause until he was familiar even with the most unfrequented peaks of the rocks?"

Mary Creyton had risen from her chair, and stood before him like a statue, but for the wild, agonized eyes losing not a single expression of his face.

"And he is dead now!" moaned she, with white, quivering lips. "He died in those far-off wilds."

"That is false. She concocted the whole; the letter was of her own devising. I tell you he came back, poor, weary-hearted man; pining for but a glimpse of your face, he came back. Hush! you know about the hermit? Mary Creyton, that hermit was George Livingstone. Now answer me, who murdered him?"

The wild, fierce, flaming look was lost on Mary. The glazing eyes saw nothing, but the words he spoke hissed and shrieked into her ears, turning her dizzy and faint. She dropped down into a chair, and her head fell forwards on the table. The taxidermist poured out a glass of water, and gave it to her drop by drop, with shaking hands and terrified face. She revived presently, and burst into a relieving flood of tears.

"Oh, my George! my martyred George!" sobbed she.

"Yes, that is my cry, day and night. Woman, he was the dearest friend the world gave to the poor taxidermist. We roamed together over those wondrous sierras. We hunted up the manifold riches and mysteries of that golden shore. We shared each other's thoughts and woes. Why am I here? Because, on my bended knees, I took an oath to avenge his wrongs, to right his good name, to punish the pitiless hand which haunted him even unto death."

The man's broad chest heaved, his eyes flashed, though the tears poured down his cheeks. Mary Creyton stretched out her hands to him.

"Heaven bless you! Oh, if I had known that he was so near! if he had only come to me! Oh, horrible, torturing thought!"

"But not so hard to bear as what you believed before. Tell me that, or I shall repent this revelation. You thought him a murderer, a reckless deserter of all that should be sacred to man. You believed him dead and buried in far Australia. Is it worse to know that he is innocent, and sleeping beneath the cross yonder by the lake?"

"No, no. You have taken away the heaviest woe. I can tell my boy of his father now, and not blush. I say again, heaven bless you!"

"And you will keep silence, and give me help, if I should need it?"

"I will," she answered, solemnly.

At that moment the girl was heard approaching the morning-room. The taxidermist rose hastily, made a respectful bow, and retreated.

(To be continued.)

MISCHIEVOUS DOGS.—According to the statute law as provided by the 28th and 29th of Victoria, cap. 60, sec. 1, in case of sheep or cattle being injured by a dog, the sheep-owner may recover damages from the dog-owner without showing "a

previous mischievous propensity, or the owner's knowledge of such propensity, or that the injury was attributable to neglect on the part of such owner." The matter then simply is, that if somebody's dog bites my sheep I can recover damages, but if the dog bites me I recover nothing unless I can prove a *scienter*. It is difficult to conjecture upon what principle this distinction between human flesh and mutton is grounded. Mr. Pitt Taylor, the judge of the Lambeth County Court, had occasion recently to remark upon this ridiculous anomaly. A workman passing a house with a sack, a dog ran out of the house and bit him, whereupon he sued the owner of the dog on account of the injury he sustained. The plaintiff not being prepared with any evidence to prove a *scienter*, the judge was about to dismiss the summons, when the plaintiff fortunately supplied the link, by stating that the defendant had informed him that his dog had once been ill-treated by a sweep, since which he had always flown at sweeps, and he supposed that he might have mistaken the plaintiff for a sweep.

THE WOOD-SORREL.

In the first place, our wood-sorrel is an excellent weather-glass: both leaves and flowers close before rain; and the latter expand fully only in the brightest sunshine, drooping at even a passing cloud. But, more remarkable still, if its leaves be roughly handled, they will as it were shrink from the touch, droop, and gradually fold up, not in the same wonderfully instantaneous manner peculiar to the leaves of the sensitive plant (*Mimosa pudica*), but perceptibly, though slowly. If you gather a plant of wood-sorrel and carry it home in your hand, you will soon find that the leaves will close, and the flowers shrivel up and die.

Curiously enough, the sensitive property of the leaves is more apparent in some specimens than in others. The manner in which the seed is sown by the plant itself is very remarkable. Some years ago, when I had even more to learn than I have now of the wonders of the works of nature, and when I had less opportunity of studying them, a kind friend sent me some roots of wood-sorrel. I thought it then, as I think it still, one of the loveliest things that I had ever beheld; and watched with wonder its leaves fold and unfold as evening succeeded to morning. Even when the blossoms had disappeared, I cherished the plants; and one fine morning in July was astonished to find what I believed to be a flower-bud rising among the leaves. Another and another appeared, and grew larger day by day. What surprised me was that they were not white, but green and swollen; and quite hard to the touch—that is, for a time; for one day, on handling one of the supposed buds, my astonishment may be imagined, when it flew open at right angles, scattering around a number of white, pearly-looking seeds! Such is the wonderful provision made for the dissemination of this little plant.

It is curious to notice that the leaves of the wood-sorrel, when folded up for the night, will not reopen if placed in a room with artificial light; differing in this from the trefoils and other night-closing plants. Many who are familiar with the beauty of the emerald leaves and pencilled flowers may not have examined the creeping root, on which are hard round knobs or scales, pink or bright red, and somewhat resembling coral. A striking variety of the wood-sorrel has been observed in some parts of England, which has bright purplish-red blossoms, and contrasts very handsomely with our ordinary form.

Those who look on everything from a utilitarian point of view, will be glad to learn that the wood-sorrel is not merely ornamental, but useful. The essential salt of lemons, well-known to ladies as a remover of inkspots from linen, is a form of oxalic acid prepared from its leaves.

THE RUMOUR is current that Her Majesty the Queen of England will visit, this summer, Her Royal Highness the Princess Alice. From thence Her Majesty will go to Gotha.

A WONDERFUL OLD MAN.—Amongst the company who attended the wool sale of Mr. W. Marshall, at Huddlesceugh Hall, some time since, at which Mr. Thornborough officiated as auctioneer, was an old man named Thomas Hutchinson, residing at Fell Gate, who has reached the extraordinary age of 112 years. Although considerably shrunk, the old man is said to possess a comparatively robust constitution, and was able, by the help of two stout sticks, to follow the auctioneer till lot 89 was "put up," when the old gentleman made a bid and became a purchaser. Old Tommy, who has stood six feet in height in his day, was a soldier in the British army, and was present at the battle of Waterloo.



[THE OLD SHANTY.]

THE LITTLE WHITE GLOVE.

"Now do not forget to write frequently, Gerty, for I shall be lonely without you. Good-by;" and Claude Rowland kissed the fair cheek of his sister's upturned face. Then Gerty sprang into the carriage, seated herself by the side of her newly-made husband, and was soon whirled rapidly away.

Claude Rowland was one of that fortunate class who enjoy the distinction of being everybody's favourite. Wealth, an endowment of more than a usual share of personal charms, and his own moral worth, made him the aim of many a fair lady's heart. But, although he was uniformly polite and chivalrous to all, yet, strange to say, he had never fallen in love.

Claude and his sister, Gertrude, had been left orphans at an almost infantile age. From his earliest recollections he had been her sole protector, and he loved her almost to idolatry. So now, when he felt himself obliged to give her up, he entered his carriage with a sigh, and drove home. "Ah, Gerty!" thought he, as he threw himself into a chair in his luxurious library, "little did I think that I was sacrificing all my happiness."

"How now, Claude—what's the matter?" exclaimed Fred Stanley, Claude's most intimate friend, entering the room.

"This house seems like a prison since Gertrude left," answered Claude, rising to greet his friend. "I think I will go away for awhile. I can never exist here in such wretched loneliness."

"Why not settle down into married life? Perhaps that would dispel some of the gloom," said his friend, half playfully, half seriously.

"Fshaw! among all our set, there is not one I would select for a wife—and you know it. I believe I am impenetrable to female charms."

"That's certain, Claude. But come, let us go to the club to dine—that's what I came for."

Lonely and sad at heart was Claude, the next day, as he took a seat in the train. After awhile, he purchased a newspaper to beguile the tediousness of his journey. As he opened it, his eyes accidentally fell on a white object at his feet. Stooping to pick it up, he discovered it to be a lady's white kid glove.

"What a pretty little thing," thought he, intently scrutinizing it. "I'll keep it, and perhaps the owner will come at the right time."

Numerous were the morning walks, moonlight rides, and pleasure parties, in which Claude engaged during that gay season. He became a universal favourite. He soon found himself surrounded by insinuating mothers and aspiring daughters. But Claude easily penetrated their artful designs. There was one, however, to whom he frequently manifested partial feelings. This was Cora Mason, noted for her amiable and lively disposition. Many could boast of more beauty; but her natural grace and gaiety of manner, her almost wild nature, made her the life of every party. Not that Claude entertained any feelings of love towards her; but her witty and lively remarks served to quiet the restless feeling at his heart for Gerty.

All this time he thought of the little glove. Often he found himself looking at the hand of the lady he was talking to, especially if she were pretty and agreeable, wondering if she could be its owner. But every hand he saw seemed too large.

In writing to his friend Fred, he narrated the finding of the glove, and added, "You ask if I see, as yet, any one who reaches my heart. I answer, 'No, and I never shall.' In fact, all is hollow here; so I have vowed to remain single, unless I can find the owner of the glove." And Fred wrote back: "I take you at your word, and hold you to

your vow; remember, it must be another Cinderella affair, or else you must forfeit your pair of five thousand; and against it, I will bet a handsome diamond brooch to be given to your Cinderella, if you ever find her and marry her." To which Claude wrote back, "Done."

About this time, there came a Miss Juliet Montague, who, by her attractive loveliness drew all the gentlemen to her shrine. She was certainly the belle of the season. For two days Claude had been confined to his room by a severe headache, and had, consequently, been prevented from beholding this beauty; but, one morning, feeling somewhat recovered from his illness, he resolved to go out and enjoy the fresh morning air. He walked on and on till he came to a thick wood, into the depth of which he plunged.

All at once he was aroused by the sound of voices quite near, one of which he recognized as that of Cora Mason, who was saying, in a tone of anxiety, "What shall we do, Juliet? How heedless we were to take this path, without knowing to where it led."

"What a romantic spot!" exclaimed Juliet. "I should like to remain here all day, if it were not for an engagement this morning. But now I wish we could see some person who could direct us into the right path."

The voice was so sweet and musical, that Claude could not forbear glancing through an opening in the bushes at the speaker. He was entranced. The fine, dark, expressive eyes were now soft and tender, and now brilliant and glowing with excitement. The magnificent hair was of that beautiful golden shade of brown which we so seldom see; and as Juliet Montague, for it was she, stood with the soft rays of the sun falling upon her, her beauty appeared almost ethereal. Her form was exquisite, the embodiment of perfection; every movement was full of queenly grace. When she spoke,

"Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The listener held his breath to hear."

Finding himself in an embarrassing situation, Claude stepped from his place of concealment, raised his hat, and said, "Can I be of service, ladies?"

"Oh, Mr. Rowland! how fortunate!" exclaimed Cora. "We are out botanizing, and have taken the wrong path, and are lost."

An introduction followed: and then Claude said, "I will accompany you back to the hotel."

"I am afraid we are trespassing on your time," said Juliet, hesitatingly. "If you will be so kind as to give us the directions, we can find the way ourselves."

"By no means, Miss Montague. Besides," he added, gallantly, "I cannot deny myself the pleasure of such agreeable companions."

After this he was frequently thrown into the society of Miss Montague, and every time his admiration increased. A week later he wrote to Fred Stanley, thus:

"I must not neglect to speak of the star, Miss Montague. You have, doubtless, heard of her extraordinary beauty, and, perhaps, have seen her. There is something so modest and attractive, so fascinating, and yet so dignified about her, that she is distinguished, by general assent, from common belles. Why, Fred, if you had not a sweetheart, I should not dare to trust you one half hour in her presence. But as for me, you know that I am inaccessible to female charms. But if I ever should fall in love, believe me, it will be either with Miss Montague, or some one approaching her as nearly as possible. Only, you know, I can do neither, unless she is the owner of the glove. I don't, you see, forget my vow."

Folding and sealing his letter, he opened his trunk, and his eyes fell upon that little kid glove in the corner. Taking it up he began soliloquizing. "Now, if the owner of this glove were as fair and beautiful as Juliet, I should certainly be tempted to love her. But, ah! I never thought of this before; perhaps she is a little pug-nosed, freckle-faced, red-haired Miss, and—" Down came the cover; the picture was too disgusting to think of—and he turned his thoughts to the elegant Juliet, who was rendered still lovelier by the contrast.

Weeks passed by, and Claude began to feel that his heart, after all, was capable of an impression. Yes; he loved Juliet Montague—and he knew it. But, with all his popularity, Claude was not vain. He feared his own deserts. How could the rich and beautiful Miss Montague condescend to look down upon one like him?

There had been a terrific thunderstorm one afternoon. The sky was dark and lowering, the rain fell unceasingly, while the peals of thunder and the lurid lightning made the day more dismal than night. Of course, all outdoor amusements were impossible. Claude had spent the most of the day in his own room, partly in reading, but chiefly in meditation. Towards the latter part of the after-

noon he descended to the drawing-room. On the staircase he met Cora Mason, pale with affright.

"Oh, Mr. Rowland!" cried she, "I am afraid Juliet is killed."

"Good heavens! What do you mean?"

"She went out this afternoon on her little white pony," hurriedly answered Cora, "saying she should be gone about an hour. It has been now four hours, and she has not yet returned. She was going to Langley Wood. It is two miles, you know, from there to any house. Oh! something has happened to her—I know it has—all alone in that horrid place."

Pale with agitation, Claude lost no time in calling a carriage. The rain poured in torrents as he drove in the direction of the wood. There was barely light enough to find the way. Claude reached the wood. He thought he saw a light object; and drawing near, he started to find it was Juliet. She had taken refuge in an old shed, which had originally been erected for stray sheep; but age and storms had completely deprived it of two sides, and only the roof remained.

"Miss Montague," cried he, hurrying to her.

"Oh, Claude!" she answered, in her excitement using his Christian name. Then a burning blush covered her face. She essayed to conceal her mistake, but the tremulous tones of her voice betrayed her confusion as she said, "Mr. Rowland, what brought you here, and in such a storm?"

"I heard of your absence, and started at once to seek you. But not a moment is to be lost; you will catch your death of cold if you stay here any longer;" and he hurried her to the carriage, wrapped around her a shawl he had brought, and ordered the coachman to drive back as fast as possible. As she sat opposite to him, weary and excited from the afternoon's adventure, he longed to tell her how much he loved her; but he would not take advantage of his position. When they reached the hotel, he gently lifted her out. She tried to express her thanks.

"Do you think," said he, "it was a task?" His voice sunk to almost a whisper, and he felt the little hand within his tremble; then he added, hastily, "It is damp here, and it would be safer to change these wet garments. I hope I shall not find you to-morrow suffering from this exposure."

The next day Juliet kept her chamber. The following one, as Claude sat waiting in a friend's room for the return of its occupant, he heard voices which he knew to be Cora Mason's and Juliet Montague's. The speakers were in the adjoining apartment, which, as he afterwards learned, was that occupied by Juliet.

"I suppose, Juliet, you will attend the ball to-morrow night?" Cora was saying.

"That is my intention," replied Juliet.

"What shall you wear?"

"I hardly know."

"Why, Juliet," cried Cora, in amazement; "the belle of the town not knowing what she is to wear at the most magnificent ball of the season. Of course, Claude Rowland will be present; and you know how particular he is about dress. I thought you were half in love with him, or he with you; but if you are so indifferent towards him, I shall begin to lay my plans with regard to him."

"You are at perfect liberty to do so," responded Juliet.

"How provokingly cool you are! Now, for my part, I have worried myself into a headache about my dress. I have purchased the loveliest pair of white kid gloves with lavender silk."

"White kids, with lavender silk?" said Juliet.

"Ah! I had such a beautiful pair, sent from Paris; but, several weeks since, before coming here, I accidentally lost one of them; it had my name written, very fine, on the inside. If I had that glove again, so as to complete the pair, yours would be nothing in comparison to them."

Claude waited to hear no more; he had, indeed, been surprised to hear this. As he lay rising, he went to his room, and taking out the glove, he found upon the inside the name, "Juliet Montague," and wondered that he had never observed it before. He wondered, too, that he had never suspected its ownership, for of all the hands he knew, Juliet's was the smallest. He covered the little glove with kisses.

The next afternoon Juliet was in her room, surrounded with lace and ribbons of every description. She had dismissed her maid that she might enjoy an hour of rest and quiet alone, before commencing her toilet for the ball. As she sat by the open window, and rested her soft cheek upon her little white hand, she fell into deep meditation. She thought of all the exciting pleasures of the season through which she had passed; she thought of the numerous suitors for her hand, whom she had painfully rejected, and then she thought of Claude Rowland. He never had proffered his heart, and the season was fast passing away; and, perhaps, after all, he did not care

anything for her. Doubtless he thought her a heartless coquette, and—

"Something for you, Miss Juliet," exclaimed Susan, her waiting-maid, entering the room, and placing a little package on the stand before her. Juliet took it up, and was once more alone. She looked at the superscription, wondering at the unfamiliar handwriting. Opening it, she found a white glove wrapped around a little perfumed note, which ran as follows:

"MISS MONTAGUE.—I cannot tell how this note will be received, but it is impossible to conceal my feelings towards you any longer—I love you. I dared not trust myself to make this declaration verbally, lest I might be doomed to disappointment, and a refusal from your lips I could not bear. If there be any hope for me, favour me by wearing the accompanying glove to the ball this evening; and, believe me, I shall watch anxiously for the little hand which shall decide my fate. Yours, &c.,

"CLAUDE ROWLAND."

A blush of pleasure overspread her face, and burying her face in her hands, she whispered: "Oh, Claude! if you had known the truth, you would never have dared to ask me personally." And then she took up the little glove, recognized it, and wondered how Claude came in possession of it. Tears of joy filled her eyes at this double pleasure, and impulsively she kissed the favourite treasure. Perhaps—who knows? her lips fell upon the same spot which Claude had pressed with kisses the day before.

The evening came. The music from the ball already resounded through the immense building. As Juliet stood before the large mirror, her toilet completed, while Susan placed on the last ornament, she looked more entrancingly beautiful than ever. Her dress was rich and costly, almost extravagantly so, yet faultless in taste and elegance. Then, blushing, she drew on the little white glove, which she had received that day from Claude.

A murmur of admiration greeted her as she entered the ball-room, leaving upon the arm of Colonel Knowles. Claude was already there, and, although surrounded by a group of friends, he eagerly looked for the little white glove. When he desisted it, he wanted to fly to her, to clasp her in his arms, to pour out his tale of love; but a ball-room was no place for such demonstrations; and it was nearly an hour before he could get rid of his associates, and find her also disengaged. She looked up as he approached, her heart beating fast. "Will you take my arm for a stroll on the terrace?" she said. She silently accepted his offer, and they left the room together.

Never sought the earth's heart of a lovelier evening. The moon shone brightly upon them in all her glorious fulness, while the cool, refreshing breeze fanned the flushed and heated cheek of Juliet.

It was a night of perfect stillness; not a sound was heard, save the echo of the gay music within. For several moments they walked on in silence; neither spoke a word till arriving at a spot far removed from the gay assembly; then Claude paused, and tenderly taking the little gloved hand within his, said:

"Juliet, did you wear this because you love me, or simply as a compliance with my request?"

He bent low to catch the tremulous tones—she was too noble to play the coquette.

"Because I love you," she whispered.

"Bless you, dearest—my Juliet!" he passionately cried, clasping her hands. And then he told the story of the little glove; how he had found it when his heart was sad and lonely; how he had been vainly seeking for the owner; and how he had at last discovered her; but found her to be far more good and beautiful than he had ever dared hope for in his pleasantest dreams.

A few weeks later, Claude returned to his home, but it was not alone—his fair bride accompanied him. He still preserves, and ever will preserve, the little white glove.

His wife wears a very beautiful diamond brooch, the history of which our readers can guess; for Fred Stanley gave it to Juliet on her wedding day; and of course Claude kept his horses. M. M.

HOW MARRIAGES ARE MADE IN ROME.—It was from an instinct of hospitality that we were shown the Conservatorio, and instructed in regard to all its purposes. We saw the neat dormitories with their battalions of little white beds; the kitchen with its gigantic coppers for boiling broth, and the refectory with the smell of the frugal dinners of generations of mendicants in it. The assistant was very proud of the neatness of everything, and was glad to talk of that, or, indeed, anything else. It appeared that the girls were taught reading, writing, and plain sewing when they were young, and that the Conservatorio

was chiefly sustained by pious contributions and bequests. Any lingering notion of the conventual character of the place was dispelled by the assistant's hurrying to say, "And when we can get the poor things well married, we are glad to do so." "But how does anyone ever see them?" "Oh! well, that is easily managed. Once a month we dress the marriageable girls in their best, and take them for a walk in the street. If an honest young man falls in love with one of them going by, he comes to the Superior, and describes her as well as he can, and demands to see her. She is called, and if both are pleased, the marriage is arranged. You see it is a very simple affair."—W. D. Howells.

SPECIFIC GRAVITY.

THE weight of an equal bulk of different substances varies very much, as every one knows. The plan has been adopted to compare them all with water, and the number representing how many times a body is heavier than water is called the specific gravity of that body. So as gold is 19 and silver 10 times heavier than water, these numbers 19 and 10 are said to represent the specific gravity of gold and silver. The heaviest of all known substances is the very hard metal used for making points to the so-called diamond gold pens. It is called iridium; its specific gravity is 25. Next comes platinum, 21; gold, 19; mercury, 13.6; lead, 11.35; silver, 10; copper, 8; iron, 7.7; zinc, 7; different kinds of stones, from 4 to 11; aluminium, 2.5. Glass and all other fibres have a specific gravity of 2.5, and are thus heavier than water, but wood will float on it according to the number of its pores into which the water does not penetrate. So ebony and many kinds of hard wood sink, and all kinds of soft wood float. Cork is the lightest wood, its specific gravity being only 0.24, less than one-quarter that of water. Alcohol is about three-quarters the weight of water, and as the strength of liquor depends on the amount of alcohol it contains, this strength is simply found out by its specific gravity indicated by the more or less floating of a little instrument called a hydrometer; the water liquid being little lighter than water has the strongest buoyant power; solutions of different salts, sugar, &c., being heavier than water, have a stronger buoyant power, and therefore vessels will sink less in the sea than in fresh water, and it is more difficult to swim in the latter than in the sea. The lightest of all liquids has a specific gravity of 0.6; it is called chimogene and is made from petroleum; it is exceedingly volatile and combustible; in fact, it is a hydrocarbon gas. Carbonic acid gas or choke damp is about 600 times lighter than water; common air, 600; street gas about 2,000, and pure hydrogen, the lightest of all substances, 12,000 times. The heaviest substance has thus 23 multiplied by 12,000 or more than a quarter of a million times more weight than an equal bulk of the lightest; and the substance of which comets are made, has by astronomers been proved to be even several thousand times lighter than hydrogen gas.

THE work of destruction is going on rapidly at the Champs de Mars. The Parisians had hoped that the gardens surrounding the Exhibition would have been preserved to them, and that a museum would have been erected out of the proceeds of the sale of the old building, amounting to about £40,000. But the Minister of War was inexorable, and so all the terraces and walks are being levelled, and the place will soon be as ugly as it was originally.

FINE TRAIT IN THE CHARACTER OF THE ABYSSINIANS.—A story is now "going the rounds" which illustrates a fine trait in the character of the Abyssinians. The natives, it appears, have a great objection to the British foraging parties helping themselves to grass and wood, though they do not mind supplying us with forage at a great profit. They have had many quarrels with our men on this subject, and more than one fight. On one occasion a number of Hindoo camp followers were found gathering up the dry wood in a sacred field. A priest appeared, and called on them as Christians to desist, when the Hindoos made some gestures of contempt or abhorrence at the name of Christians. The priest and his followers then fell upon them, and a struggle ensued. The Hindoos retired on the camp, and the Abyssinians followed; and their priest was seized by a camp policeman and taken before Sir Robert Napier. Sir Robert, after investigating the whole matter, ordered the Hindoos a dozen lashes apiece for insulting the religion of the people. But here the Abyssinians really showed themselves to be Christians, for the priest and his witnesses, all of whom bore marks of having suffered in the skirmish, knelt down, and said they would not rise until the culprits were forgiven, which accordingly they were

THE WITCH FINDER.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHILE Bruno was thus making havoc of everything set before him, he was joined by Hester's cat, which purred her friendly greetings to her old acquaintance, rubbing against him, and picking up the morsels which the great haste of the bear caused him to scatter.

"See how glad Tabby is to see him!" exclaimed Hester, forgetting all her perils in the innocent joy the two pets afforded her. "And yet there are people wicked enough to say that animals have no gratitude, no memory!"

The meal was soon finished, and Bruno, seeing that the hostess was not going to give him anything more, turned towards the sitting-room, where he again seated himself before the fire, and commenced licking himself with an air of great relief and contentment.

"He's evidently been without food a day or two," observed Hester. "He's hungry yet, but it will not do to give him all he wants. How wicked and cruel it was for those girls to starve him! The poor fellow shall stay with us till Philip's arrival."

The object of her remarks suddenly bounded uneasily, throwing his nose into the air, and ran sniffing to the door, thence to the kitchen, and next to one of the kitchen windows, on the side nearest the sea, where he placed his paws upon the sill, his nostrils against the sash, and commenced sniffing so loud and eagerly that the mother and daughter were startled.

"He scents somebody," said Mrs. Waybrook, anxiously. "Can it be that Mr. Boardbush is returning?"

"It may be; or the girls may have sent a man after the runaway," replied Hester. "Do you hear any footstep?"

"Not a sound," declared the mother, after listening attentively. "But Bruno can scent an enemy long before he is able to see him."

The uneasiness of the bear had now become a positive agitation. Bounding backward and forward near the window, he continued to sniff the air which came in at the crevices, and at length hurled himself against the kitchen door, as if anxious to set forth on a tour of inquiry. He next returned to Hester's side and looked up into her face, with such an excited and restless manner that she questioned herself earnestly as to its nature.

"He surely scents somebody, and that somebody is no stranger to him," pursued Mrs. Waybrook. "How excited he is! What shall we do with him?"

A sudden light flashed upon Hester. "Oh, if it should be my father and Philip!" she exclaimed, trembling with excitement. "Our love has told us that they are near us, and why should not the instinct of Bruno tell him the same story? You know that the superior animals are many of them endowed with a power of scent that is wonderful, almost startling. Think how a dog will track his master, who is miles away, by the scent that master's steps retain on the sand, and how he will stick to this one scent, although a thousand other men may have crossed the trail in different directions."

"True, there is scarcely anything so marvellous to be said on this subject," rejoined Mrs. Waybrook, "and the bear vies with the dog in the number and perfection of its attributes. The wind is north-east to-night, and consequently in the very direction to bring the scent of Philip ashore, if he be approaching."

"More especially," added Hester, "as the wind is blowing fresher than usual, and the distance so short. It must be that Philip is coming, and that Bruno scents him."

"Or it may be that he scents more than Philip—a ship, a boat, a number of men at once, a great smell of cooking—in a word, all the thousand strong odours which a ship would inevitably have aboard of her after a long voyage. It is even possible that the bear may possess a sense more refined and subtle than his scent—an instinct—a mysterious sentiment, which tells him that his master is near him. Who knows? There is an endless variety of these wonderful faculties displayed in the animal creation, and we must admit their action, their actual manifestations, however ignorant we may be of their nature."

A terrible crash followed, filling the two women with alarm and terror, and a gust of wind came through the house, extinguishing the candles Hester had lighted while entertaining Boardbush, and plunging the sitting-room and kitchen into semi-darkness.

There was sufficient light in the great kitchen fireplace, however, to permit the mother and daughter to learn the secret of the crash which had so frightened them. The truth was, the bear had

lost his patience, while they were discussing his qualities, and had plunged through one of the windows, sash, glass, shutters and all, vanishing instantly from their presence.

"He's gone," cried Hester, as she ran to the window and looked out into the night. "There he goes, towards the water, sniffing, whining, and bounding away towards the Neck. Oh, mother! there is no longer any doubt of the cause of his excitement! He scents the arrival of Philip, and is going to meet him. The distance is short, and the strong wind, blowing so directly ashore from the harbour, has announced his arrival to the keen senses of Bruno. Oh, mother, do not let our love be less active than his instinct! Let us go to meet father and Philip!"

"Quick!" exclaimed Hester. "Let us take a lantern to show us the way, a rope to tie Bruno, and thus retain him as a guide, if we can overtake him or find him. Fortunately the shutters are not broken, only thrown open, and we can fasten them together without trouble, thus making the house tolerably secure and safe during our absence."

No time was lost in making the few preparations necessary, and the two women then left the house, looking both of the outside doors, and hurried away in the direction taken by Bruno.

"He has gone towards the sea," murmured Mrs. Waybrook, "and we can do no better than imitate his movements. It is a terrible night in which to make these winter-bound coasts, and it is likely that Philip, if his ship has arrived, will not come ashore until morning."

Thus buying their thoughts with a host of hopeful speculations and theories, the two women continued their hasty course towards the sea, heedless of the cold and the snow, and all the forbidding features of the scene around them.

"There is Bruno!" at length exclaimed Hester, as a dark object came bounding through the darkness towards her. "He came back to find us."

It was Bruno sure enough, but Bruno so joyful, so assured in his convictions, whatever they were, that the mother and daughter could hardly control their emotions, as they contemplated his intelligent face by the ray of their lantern.

"He has found something," declared Mrs. Waybrook, interpreting the air of her dumb attendant. "Slip your rope round his neck, and we will keep him with us, following him to the discovery which he has evidently made already."

The bear was promptly secured, and the little party resumed its way towards the Neck, the two women thrilling with hope, and the guide trotting along ahead of them, and occasionally looking up into their faces.

CHAPTER IX.

THE rage of Boardbush, at the final rejection of his suit by Hester, was too great for utterance. Raging internally, he went at random through the streets, heedless of everything around him. His instinct, however, guided him towards the harbour, for his house was in that direction, not to mention his appointment with Miss Stoughton.

By the time he had begun to recover his self-control, he had reached the beach in front of the residence of Mr. Stoughton, and here his attention was attracted to the enormous masses of ice which had stranded along the shore, driven thither by the north-east wind.

A second glance, and his eyes beheld indistinctly a dark object in the midst of these irregular white masses, and at the distance of only a few yards from the landing.

"A boat, eh?" he muttered, halting. "What is it doing there? It's not the judge's old box," and he glanced along the beach; "no, for here's the judge's, in its usual place, half buried in the sand. Hallo, there!"

This hail from the Witch Finder was occasioned by his catching a glimpse of a man in the boat.

"Hallo, there!" he repeated. "What are you at? Why don't you come ashore?"

The only answer was a moan, so low and brief that Boardbush ascribed it to the wind.

"I must see to this," he added. "The boat is evidently adrift. She may have come from some vessel."

The reader has already seen enough of this sinister man to suspect that he had many secrets not yet revealed, that his life was full of nocturnal journeys and occupations, and that his resources were as extensive as the nature of his habits and pursuits demanded.

It will occasion no surprise, therefore, for us to say that the object of the Witch Finder was speedily accomplished; he returned to the landing, keeping his lighted lantern properly sheltered under the folds of his overcoat.

There were at least two good reasons for this secrecy, the first was that the Witch Finder was always secret, as a habit, and the second that he had already suspected that something interesting might grow out of his discovery of the mysterious boat.

"Hallo, there!" he called again, as he flashed a few rays from his lantern towards the object of his researches. "Why don't you answer? Where did you come from? Do you want any help?"

No response was made to him. For an instant the habitual caution of Boardbush kept him motionless, and it was clear that he was puzzled.

"There's surely a man there," he muttered. "And he must be dead or unconscious—if he be not up to some trick, which is unlikely."

Having reached these conclusions, the next step of the investigator was to commence feeling his way cautiously out upon the ice lying between him and the boat. As much to his surprise as to his joy, he found that the vast masses of ice accumulated against the landing were sufficiently compact to bear his weight, and that he could trust himself upon them with a tolerable degree of safety. He accordingly continued to advance, lighting his way with his lantern, but without permitting a solitary ray from it to escape shoreward, for all the secret instincts of his nature were now in full activity. Thus advancing, with his glances alternating between his footing and the boat, he suddenly uttered a strange, venomous cry and came to a halt, transfixed with joy.

"The Harbinger!" he shouted, with such a fierce tone of delight that the name was half strangled in his throat. "The Harbinger!"

He fixed his eyes upon this name, pointed upon the bow of the boat, which was turned towards him, and now close before him.

"At last I have news from her!" he added, in a whisper full of exultation. "It is as I said. She is done for!"

Delighted with his discoveries, and too excited to think of the dangers of the movement, he hastened towards the boat, scrambling over the blocks of ice, with the aid of his lantern, and was speedily alongside of the object of his attention.

"A man, sure enough!" he muttered, as he stepped into the boat. "It is as I suspected—a case of wreck and trouble, perhaps death."

He turned over, with considerable difficulty, the motionless form at his feet, and held his lantern in such a way as to flash its rays upon the features thus revealed to him.

A single look at them, and he started as if shot.

"Waybrook!" he shouted, in a tone of surprise and excitement to which words cannot do justice. "The trader! the girl's father!"

It was, indeed, the form of the merchant that lay before the Witch Finder, and a few words will explain its presence there, and its situation.

When Philip fell, extinguishing his lantern, and disappeared into the water, as recorded at the time of the attempted escape of the two men over the ice shoreward, the merchant still retained in his hand the painter of their boat, and his first impulse, after the crisis thus came, was to guide himself, with this rope, back to the frail craft they had abandoned. Acting upon this impulse, struggling with all the energy of desperation, and not once letting go of the rope thus guiding him in the darkness, the resolute man succeeded, after many falls and partial immersions, in reaching the boat, throwing himself into it, and in creeping into his late shelter and sleeping-place; but there his senses had left him.

Kneeling beside Mr. Waybrook, and again uncovering his lantern, Boardbush gave him a long and searching examination, at the end of which he muttered to himself:

"His face tells the story. He's only just alive, and must have had a terrible time before he reached this condition—days and nights of fatigue, cold, and hunger! He lives, however; he has kept himself covered with these blankets. He's only in a faint. Some sudden shock must have unshipped him. I come to his aid just at the right moment."

Again masking his light, the Witch Finder produced a small, thin flask from a side-pocket, and poured its entire contents down the throat of the unconscious merchant, who moaned feebly under this treatment, and in a way which showed that the breath of life was very weak in him.

"That will soon bring him round," muttered Boardbush, replacing the flask in his pocket with the air of a man who had done everything demanded by the occasion. Continuing to guard his light from observation, the Witch Finder made a hasty, but complete examination of the boat and its contents, noticing the remains of the provisions of the two men, their empty water-casks, the stump of the mast, and all the objects before him.

"I see," he then muttered, with increased jubilation.

lance. "The Harbinger is ashore, somewhere in this direction, and Mr. Waybrook has been sent forward to procure assistance. Another man, or two, may have been sent with him—probably have been—for the water and provisions were sufficient for several, and two, at least, would have been required to man the boat. Perhaps this second man was Ross himself—most likely. Be that as it may, these extra men, be their number what it may, are all lost, else the trader would not have been left in this manner to perish. Any man, coming with him, would have taken him ashore, if he'd got ashore himself, or would have sent help to him."

This reasoning was singularly convincing to a man of the Witch Finder's ability, and it did not once occur to him that there could be any mistake about it. The rescue of Philip had actually been a wonderful interposition of Providence, rather than a result of any foreseen circumstance; and when Boardbush looked away in the direction of the nearest dwellings, particularly the judge's, and saw that no alarm had been given, that no commotion was visible, and that no one was coming to the merchant's relief, he ceased to have a doubt of the death of the voyager's companion.

"Yes, he's dead," he added, with a coarse chuckle of satisfaction, "and the trader is left entirely to my tender mercies! A nice thing it is, too, for me to have the girl's father in my keeping, for he is from this moment ample security for the hand of his daughter! I shall know how to reach her through him, no doubt, and how fortunate it is to me that he is thus thrust into my hands! and at such a timely moment! Nothing could be better! To think, too, how rich he is, and how I can make him pay liberally for all the services I am about to render him! Is it not delightful? No one knows, or ever will know, of his return, until everything is arranged to my liking—until the girl is mine, and I have received with her a portion of the trader's wealth! Capital! magnificent! 'Tis the crowning of all my good fortune!"

It was the work of an instant only for him to convey the unconscious merchant to the beach, and he then placed several large stones in the boat, knocked a hole in the bow with the axe Philip had brought with him against contingencies—the same with which he had cut away the mast. The sinking of the boat being thus assured, Boardbush pushed it with all his might away from the shore, following it some distance into the water, heedless of the wetting he was getting, for he wished to have it sink so far from the beach that it would not be readily discovered.

"And now to take good care of my dear friend Waybrook," he added, as he raised the slight figure of the merchant in his arms, without the least difficulty or exertion. "Fortunately my house is not far distant, and the scene around us is dark and solitary enough for me to go home unseen and unsuspected."

On the north side of the Neck, near the narrow strip of land which unites this peninsula with its larger neighbour, there existed at the date of our story a bold promontory, as angular as barren crags and cliffs could make it, with rocky sides and base, and having that sharp outline which distinguishes many of the headlands. This promontory no longer exists, its top having been made level along its sides a century and a half since by the then owner of the adjacent land; but a projection resulting from it may still be traced in the line of the shore, and a general elevation of the ground in that vicinity still indicates, with sufficient clearness, the length and breadth of its site.

This barren bluff, in the early days of Salem, was called the Pilot's Handle, from the aid it gave to the seafaring community in "taking up" the land when entering the harbour.

From the first formation of the colony up to a period not exceeding six months previous to the events we are describing, the Pilot's Handle had remained solitary, a habitation of sea-birds, a landmark for the navigator, and a useless piece of the pasture-ground in which it was included.

At the time last mentioned, however, the Witch Finder, beginning to acquire his terrible reputation, and having obtained—no one knew how—a large sum of money, had purchased the Handle and the adjoining ground, hired a number of men, and set himself to building a strong log-house upon the very summit of the promontory. This structure had been entirely completed in three months, and was known to have all the strength and solidity of a fort, for Boardbush professed to have a great fear of the Indians. It had become well known as the habitation of that sinister man; but few of the Salemites, except his fellow witch-hunters, had ever cared to set foot within it, for the building was as uninviting as its occupant, and the troubles of the time had nearly put an end to the social intercourse of the colonists with one another.

Such was the home of the Witch Finder, and it is needless to say that its origin, its character, had provoked an unusual amount of discussion. Why had Boardbush chosen such a lonely place for his abode? where did he get his money? and why had he built a house so much resembling a stronghold? No definite answer had ever been returned to any of these inquiries, and they remain for solution in the progress of the events we are recording.

The rapid pace of Boardbush, as he retreated from the beach, after securing the insensible form of Mr. Waybrook, soon brought him to his house. In shape and general appearance, it was very much like the judge's, except that it was as much smaller as it was stronger, it having been considerably curtailed at one of its extremities. There was no light or fire in it, at the time of the owner's return, for he lived entirely alone, without any housekeeper or servant.

Ascending the promontory and passing his gate, he paused a moment at the entrance of the house, and looked around, to assure himself that he had not been watched or followed. Satisfied upon these points, he produced a latch-key from one of his numerous pockets, and gave himself admittance to the principal room, the kitchen. Placing the insensible merchant upon a couch before the fireplace, he closed and locked the door, lighted a candle, kindled a fire, and seated himself beside his unconscious guest, with the air of a beast of prey which has placed an impassable barrier between its enemies and its haunts.

CHAPTER X.

It would be impossible to portray the intense look of joy and triumph which overspread the Witch Finder's visage, as he contemplated the motionless figure of Mr. Waybrook, and realized that he had reached his home unobserved and unsuspected.

"A nice prize," he muttered, "the father of my fair damsel, the hostage for her conduct from this time forward."

He administered another large quantity of his favourite beverage to the merchant, and then seated himself in a chair near the hearth, with an air of great satisfaction, beginning to muse seriously and practically upon his situation.

And now that he was able, as he supposed, to be revenged upon Hester for the final rejection of his suit, he gave himself up to the bitter and revengeful feelings which filled his whole soul to overflowing.

Why should she reject him?

Was he not handsome, youthful, learned, witty, genial, charming, graceful, good, generous, distinguished, and so forth, to such an extent that all the friendly adjectives of the dictionary did not suffice to do him complete justice?

Why should not the girl respect him?

Was he not the popular Boardbush, a chief of a large class, a friend of Cotton Mather and of Stoughton, a man of the first respectability, and one superior in every way to any other in the colony?

Why, to refuse an offer of marriage from him, the girl must be touched with insanity or desperately wicked.

"Revenge!" at last broke from his lips, in a hoarse whisper. "Oh, I will pay those women for their insults! That girl shall marry me, or she and her whole tribe shall hang as witches."

There was one consideration, however, as he reflected farther, which stood between him and this sanguinary vengeance. The interview he had so lately had with Hester had left him more than ever under the spell of her loveliness, and no language can tell how forcibly he felt the contrast between the charming picture of life she presented, and the ghastly death to which he had half-resolved to deliver her.

"After all," he said, speaking to himself, "the battle is not lost, only beginning. As certain as I am of the loss of the lover, as influential as I am in the community, and as many resources as I have at my disposal, why should I murmur? What opposition can a friendless girl like Hester really offer to me, now that the trader is in my keeping?"

A moan from Mr. Waybrook put an end to these reflections, and called the attention of Boardbush to the condition of the man so strangely placed at his mercy. Kneeling at his side, chafing his hands, and looking into the pale and emaciated face of the merchant, the Witch Finder speedily assured himself that the unconscious man would soon recover his senses.

"The sooner the better," thought Boardbush, with a gleaming eye. "I wish to talk with him."

The increasing moans of the patient encouraged him in this work, and ere long he had the pleasure of seeing the trader open his eyes, and move his head from side to side, with a conscious look and manner.

"Saved, it seems," came in a faint whisper from the pale lips of the sufferer. "Is it you, Philip?"

The expression which passed over the Witch Finder's face, on hearing this question, was not so much one of surprise as of eager interest.

"It was Philip, then, who was with you in the boat?" he demanded.

"Yes. I see that you are not he. Is he safe?"

"That depends," said Boardbush, with a rising interest; "were you or he seen by any one on the shore landing in your boat?"

"No; not until after we had taken to the ice. At that instant, and while we were trying to reach the shore—"

"You were seen?" said Boardbush, with a start and a sudden tremor as full of uneasiness as of excitement.

"Yes; we were seen, by some one at the judge's—I thought a woman!"

A sort of a smothered curse escaped the listener.

"We certainly saw a lantern approaching the water, and knew that our condition had been discovered—the more naturally as both had called loudly for assistance!"

The Witch Finder moved uneasily, with a deeper tremor of uneasiness, and finally arose to his feet, moving to and fro excitedly in the apartment.

"That was the last I knew," added Mr. Waybrook, trying to arise; "for my senses left me. Tell me, for heaven's sake, was Philip discovered and rescued?"

"I do not know," answered Boardbush, after a thoughtful pause. "I was not there at the moment, and only found you some minutes after. Suppose you give me some opinion on the matter?"

"Well, I believe that he must have been saved!" declared the merchant, after a painful debate with his fears—"the more especially as you did not see or hear anything of him. If he had not been rescued, the person we saw approaching with a lantern would have remained on the look-out on the landing, and you would have seen them."

The inflamed features of Boardbush became more livid than ever as he listened to this simple but powerful reasoning. Conceding that the merchant had really seen Miss Stoughton with a lantern, it was evident that she had seen Philip and rescued him, and at once shut herself up in the house with him. That would account for the darkness and silence Boardbush had remarked at the judge's. Her well-known passion for the young captain was another fact in favour of this reasoning.

"You are right," replied Boardbush, in a voice so altered and hoarse with rage and vexation, that Mr. Waybrook started. "Philip was saved by Temperance Stoughton, and is now safe. Your reasoning has made the fact as plain to me as if I had witnessed his rescue with my own eyes!"

"Oh, heaven, bless you for the assurance," murmured the merchant, in a voice so weak that it was scarcely audible. "This hope of his safety is as a new life to me!"

The blackness this conviction produced upon the features of the Witch Finder, after his well-known views on the subject, can be readily imagined. He felt that the rescue of the young sailor was an immense calamity, and one that more than negated the good fortune he had in securing the person of Mr. Waybrook.

"And now," at length said the merchant, when he had received a new lease of strength, "a word about myself. Where am I? Let me know the name of my preserver."

"My name is Boardbush," was the answer; "and you are safe in my house. I found you senseless in your boat, and have brought you home with me, given you every care, and am rejoiced beyond measure at seeing you again in possession of your senses!"

"You will have my thanks," said he, "and those of my dear family, to the latest hour of my existence. Did I hear your name rightly? Boardbush, did you say? It seems quite unfamiliar to me!"

"That is my name," answered the Witch Finder, averting his face to conceal the scowls which had appeared upon it.

Mr. Waybrook suddenly recalled an obscure person of the name, who had been of no consequence whatever—who had spent all his life in idleness and its consequent poverty—but he did not dare, of course, to presume that the man who had saved him was a relative of that worthless fellow.

"I'm in your house, then, Mr. Boardbush?" he asked, by way of replying to the Witch Finder's observation. "I suppose you are acquainted with my family?"

Boardbush assented, but without speaking, for he was engaged in a deep mental inquiry as to his future action.

"Perhaps your house is at no great distance from mine?" pursued the merchant, arising to a sitting

posture, but not without discovering that he was as weak as a child. "I almost wonder that you did not take me home to my wife and daughter. It seems that you knew me."

"I brought you here," explained Boardbush, who had arrived at an idea of his course of action, "for the simple reason that my house is much nearer to the sea than yours, and consequently more accessible. In the second place, I wanted you to have prompt care and attention. In the third place, I wished to prepare your family to receive you, and not take you to them in that death-like condition. In the fourth place—"

"Oh, don't explain farther, I beg of you," interrupted the merchant. "I beg your pardon if my remark offended you. I did not mean to complain of your conduct in bringing me to your house—on the contrary. You have no doubt taken the course that was right and proper. Again I beg to tender you my heartfelt acknowledgments for this immense service."

Boardbush extended his hand to the merchant, as a proof that no offence had been given, for the conversation had now taken that confidential turn that he desired to give to it.

"I will go home at once," declared the merchant, endeavouring to arise unassisted to his feet. "You cannot imagine how anxious I am to inform my family of my safety, and to see if Philip has really been rescued."

"Very good," rejoined Boardbush, as he marked, with a gleaming eye, how weak and helpless the merchant had become through his long exposure and suffering. "But you turn pale—your limbs tremble! You are unequal to the effort you are making. Permit me to assist you."

He seized the arms of the merchant, just in time to prevent him from falling, and assisted him to a seat on the couch from which he had arisen.

"'Tis true—my strength is all gone," murmured the merchant, fearfully. "I would not have believed it possible!"

"On the contrary, you should be thankful that you are as well off as you are," rejoined Boardbush.

"Oh, my wife! my child!" cried Mr. Waybrook, almost sobbing, such was his realization of his weakness and helplessness. "How shall I go to you? How will you find me?"

"I think you will have to accept my offer," observed Boardbush, quietly. "I will first make you comfortable; I will then go for your wife and daughter, and conduct them to you. I will next procure a horse, as soon as you think you are strong enough to ride, and assist you to your own house."

"Oh, thanks, thanks!" responded the merchant, becoming calmer. "Your plan has my full approbation—if it will not be too much trouble for you to do all this for me."

"Don't speak of it," said Boardbush, with a gratified expression of face. "I am more than happy in serving you—thankful to have such an opportunity of showing you a little neighbourly feeling."

"Oh, do not delay going for my wife and daughter!" interrupted Mr. Waybrook, in a pleading voice. "You can bring me some more brandy or whiskey, for I feel that you have been giving me something of this kind, and I will help myself in your absence."

"I shall do as you say," answered the Witch Finder. "I will bring you some brandy and such eatables as I happen to have in the pantry, and then leave you long enough to go for your wife and daughter; while I'm gone, do not get impatient, however long my absence may seem, and do not have any anxieties whatever. I will return with your wife and daughter."

With this cheering assurance, he left the room and the house, and was soon on the brow of the promontory outside his dwelling.

"I must see at once if Temperance has saved young Ross," he thought to himself, as he halted at his gate a moment, and marked the silence and solitude around him. "Thanks to this pretence of benignity to the trader and his family, I shall be able to make a survey of the whole field, and it will then be easy enough for me to commence informing him of the real state of our relations."

With these sinister words, so worthy of his false and wicked nature, the Witch Finder hurried away in the direction of Mr. Stoughton's.

CHAPTER XI.

TRUE to the purpose he had formed, Corporal Trueaxe hastened to his cabin, after leaving Temperance Stoughton, and provided himself with a lantern, a flask of brandy, a pole, with a nail in one end of it, to support him on the ice, and a pair of immense

waterproof boots, which, while they had the merit of keeping him dry, had equally the demerit of being so heavy and cumbersome as to interfere seriously with the celerity of his movements.

"If I find that lost pilgrim," said he, all ready to set forth, "I shall be paid, of course. Oh, it's a wild night!" he exclaimed, as he encountered a fierce gust of wind at the corner of his cabin—"a night to make an old bachelor like me sigh for companionship. I shall marry, to be sure, in due course of time, as I'm only sixty-two, but really a few years more of such weather as this would strengthen my resolution to do so."

Hurrying steadily on his way, the corporal soon reached the beach in front of Mr. Stoughton's, and commenced scrutinizing earnestly the masses of ice there presented to his notice. No sign of life was visible, however, no boat, no object to tell him of the events which had so lately occurred there, for Boardbush, after sinking the boat of Philip and Mr. Waybrook, had long since vanished with the rescued merchant.

"A fine place, truly, to look for a lost pilgrim!" exclaimed Trueaxe, with a shiver, and in a tone of disgust and discouragement. "Does any man suppose that any other man would be lying here in such an ice heap as I see before me? Hang me, if any such man has any such idea, all I can say is that he may come here and hunt for his pilgrim as long as he pleases. I've done all I shall do in that particular line at present."

Notwithstanding his discouragement, the corporal had advanced resolutely upon the ice, while making these declarations, and he continued to move seaward, searching carefully and vigorously until his position was one of great peril.

"Here you are!" he shouted with all the strength of his lungs, while he waved his lantern to and fro above his head. "This way! Give us a hint of your whereabouts! Come in this direction, all of you! This way!"

He listened, of course, to see if any reply would be made to him, but none came.

"Fact is," he added, "that pilgrim's frozen to death, far out on some floating cake of ice, or else he's already gone to the bottom. In either case, what's the use of my staying here any longer? I shall do no good—learn nothing; and the quicker I'm out of this the better!"

The cracking and grinding of the ice beneath his feet was indeed a sufficient warning, and one that no man would have left unheeded under the circumstances. The corporal accordingly retraced his steps to the beach, sighing over the non-success of his efforts, and expressing the intention of making a thorough search for him on the morrow.

At the very instant the corporal reached the landing, he heard a strange shuffling and scratching on the shore, at no great distance from him, in the direction of the town, and ere long he beheld an ungainly object advancing by a succession of bounds and spralls, but at a swift rate of speed.

The old soldier's tried courage was not proof against the tremor of apprehension that suddenly seized him, and he hastened to beat a retreat upon the ice.

As he thus retreated, however, holding his lantern and pike-pole before him, the object of his fears came near enough to be seen with greater distinctness, and he then perceived that the intruder was a large, black bear.

The animal, of course, was Bruno, the bear belonging to Philip.

"Oh—ah!" stammered Corporal Trueaxe, drawing a long breath, as he recognized the animal. "I know him now. It's that bear of Philip's. Where can he have been all these months? I haven't seen him for a long time. Nice bear! Hey, Bruno, you know your old friend, don't you?"

Sniffing and excited, the bear had halted on the extreme edge of the shore, with his eyes fixed upon Trueaxe, and with an air of anxious inquiry on his face that was happily veiled from the old corporal by the darkness.

"Nice and good bear!" pursued Trueaxe, in the most enticing tone he could assume. "Did he want some apples and honey? Remarkable animal! Just as gentle as a dog. Was never known to hurt anybody," and he commenced running to the shore. "Hey, Bruno! just as cunning as he is clever! Never saw his like—knows more than half the men in Salem!"

As the corporal advanced shoreward, the excitement of Bruno seemed to increase with his every step, for the movements of the animal became more and more active, he leaping backwards and forwards along the edge of the water, and even venturing upon the ice. Owing to the darkness, however, Trueaxe ascribed all these leaps and jumps to the sportive disposition of Bruno, and was pleased and calmed by them.

"A perfect marvel of good nature!" he ejaculated, continuing to advance. "Just as playful as a kitten! Hey, Bruno! Roll over, Bruno, roll over!"

By this time the corporal had reached the beach, and the bear had come forward for a more vigorous inquiry, almost throwing himself upon the object of his investigations, leaping to one side and the other, sniffing with a strange force and celerity, passing around Trueaxe repeatedly, and finally becoming so rough and forcible in his inquiries, thrusting his nose against him with such violence, and pushing him this way and that with such vigour, that the old soldier was terrified.

"What ails him?" was his exclamation, as he at length noticed the excited condition of the animal. "What is he after? Why is he nosing me in this savage fashion? Can it be that he has got the high-drooby?"

The thought was withering, thus coupled with all his previous fears, and Corporal Trueaxe lost no time in making for the ice again, just as fast as the continued and pressing nosings he received from Bruno permitted.

"It must be!" he exclaimed, and more frightened. "Why shouldn't a bear have the high-drooby just as much as a cat or a dog? Yes, he's got it! He's broken loose—I hear his chain rattling! Oh, destruction! heaven help me!"

These last ejaculations, uttered in tones of absolute terror, were occasioned by the discovery that the bear was unmuzzled, and this discovery completely upset the corporal's self-possession. Leaping fully two yards backwards at a bound, he accomplished another retreat upon the ice as far seaward as the condition of that material would permit.

For a moment the bear, thus thwarted in his inquiries, seemed to have the intention of following the fugitive, but the movements of the ice disconcerted him before he had advanced half a dozen steps, and he suddenly turned and retreated.

"Good luck go with him!" muttered Corporal Trueaxe, relieved beyond measure by this movement. "I hope he'll go away altogether. A fine business, truly, to let a great ugly beast like that go loose round the settlement, with his mouth open ready to eat the first man he encounters! There he goes, sure enough," added he, as he commenced scrambling back to the shore. "I hope I'm now at liberty to quit this pilgrim business! I've had enough of it!"

He again reached the shore in safety, and was in the act of starting for home, when his attention was attracted by a moving light at a considerable distance, the light of a lantern apparently, that was being carried in the hand of some person who was hurrying towards the harbour.

"It is the judge," muttered Trueaxe, "the old deacon, or some of the neighbours who have been to that bridge-meeting. I'll wait and see what the vote was, and what's the news in town, if any. Or it may be that it is somebody who's found the lost pilgrim, and is coming back for farther investigations. In any case I'll wait and see them!"

As he continued to look towards the light, he saw it occasionally vanish and reappear, passing behind some house or other intervening object, but at length, as it came nearer, following the shore, he saw that it was carried by a woman.

The new-comers, in fact, were Hester Waybrook and her mother, preceded by Bruno.

It will be remembered that the bear had set forth on his inquiry alone, and that he had returned to the two women, who had thereupon secured him by placing a rope around his neck, so as to be sure of his guidance. They knew, of course, as has been already stated, that he had made some discovery, for his manner, after his return from his interview with Trueaxe, as just now recorded, was full of excitement and interest.

"I see," muttered the old corporal, after his regard had been fixed a full minute upon the approaching party. "They're a couple of women? What can they be after?"

The curiosity of Trueaxe was strong enough to keep him motionless on the beach, for the two women advanced in a straight line towards him. In good truth, they were thus guided by an agent that was still invisible to the old soldier, for the bear was held well in hand by Hester, to the right of her, while the light was carried by Mrs. Waybrook to the left, and she herself walking to the left of her daughter, so that the animal was in their double shadow.

"Confound it!" suddenly cried the old corporal, as he recognized Mrs. Waybrook, and consequently guessed at Hester's identity. "What's the secret of this business? They do say that those women are witches, and they must be, to have learned already of Philip's arrival! That infernal bear's with them!"

This last discovery was too much for the equanimity of the old corporal, and he turned to flee, full of fear and consternation. This movement, however,

was fully revealed by the lantern he carried, and it was promptly imitated by the two women, more especially by Bruno, who pulled so hard as to make his escape from Hester. In an instant, and before the corporal had gone ten rods, the bear had overtaken him, brought him to a halt, and resumed his excited inquiries, thrusting his nose against him with an earnestness that was almost savage, and sniffing as if about to devour him.

"Take him off! take him off!" shouted the corporal, as he turned imploringly to the two women. "He'll eat me alive!"

"But why is he sniffing at you?" inquired Hester, as she reached the spot and seized the bear by his collar. "Why does he act so strangely?"

"Oh, he's bewitched!" groaned the corporal, sinking down upon his knees, to avoid being thrown down by the furious nosings of the animal. "The cats are all bewitched in Salem, and now the bear's possessed! Keep him off! keep him off! Don't let him eat me!"

"But I can't hold him!" replied Hester. "You'll have to tell me what ails him!"

"Well, I will! I will!" shouted the corporal, driven to desperation by the pokes and thrusts he was receiving, with no prospect of their abatement. "The bear's bewitched! the demon's in him! and there's no use of my trying to keep the secret!"

"The secret?" echoed the mother and daughter.

"Yes, the secret of Philip's arrival!" pursued the old corporal, struggling with his tormentor. "He's come! he's landed! I've put him to bed! and this bewitched beast knows it! The scent of Philip is in my garments! It hangs around me like a millstone! and this dumb-founded and puzzled creature don't know whether I'm Philip smelling of Trueaxe, or Trueaxe smelling of Philip!"

"Arrived? Philip landed?" exclaimed Hester, startled beyond measure, but retaining her outward calmness. "Where is he?"

"At the judge's," replied Trueaxe.

(To be continued.)

FACETIE.

Who is the laziest man? The furniture dealer; he keeps chairs and lounges about all the time.

"Thou who rainest in my bosom," as the chap said, when a basin of water was thrown over him by the lady he was serenading.

A SERVANT-GIRL, writing a letter, asked her master if the next month had come in yet. He laughed. "Well," she said, "what I mean, is—has the last month gone out yet?"

FIRST CLASS BOARDING-HOUSE.—A great deal of pretension, exorbitant charges, and nothing to eat; insults from the landlady if you complain, and lawsuits if you don't pay promptly for what you never had.

AT CROSS PURPOSES.

Dumphy: "I'm sure, Miss Thompson, you must be very much annoyed by the persistent attentions of some persons who have not sufficient penetration to see they are bores—"

Crane: "Ah! Excuse me, Miss T.! When you are through with the elderly person, I wish a word with you!"

[Miss T. mentally wishes them both in the bottom of the sea.]

NEVER set yourself up for a musician just because you have got a drum in your ear, nor believe you are cut out for a school teacher merely because you have a pupil in your eye.

WILSON, the celebrated vocalist, was upset one day in his carriage, near to Edinburgh. A Scotch paper, after recording the accident, adds: "We are happy to state that he was able to appear the following evening in three pieces!"

HOUSEHOLD RECIPES.—To beat carpets: Use matting; for coolness it beats carpets.—To make a window blind: Fill it up with bricks and mortar.—To prevent the creaking of a door: Nail it up.—To obtain sleep: Have nothing but "nodding" acquaintances.—To keep up your spirits: Place the decanters on the roof of the house.

CORRECTING THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE OF ENGLAND.—At the recent assizes at Lewes, in a case of felony from Frank, a police constable of the E.S.C., whilst giving evidence, was asked the question by Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, "Did you find it just as it was?" To this he replied, "No, my lord; it was just as it were." His lordship pocketed the affront, as also the attack upon his Lindsey Murray, whilst the court roared with laughter.

A TOO FORTUNATE SERVANT.—Upon the great question of servantism, Mrs. Housewife has favoured us with this anecdote. She had advertised for

a parlour-maid, and a young woman in deep mourning came to see about the place. Her account of herself was quite satisfactory, and it was arranged that her character should be written for, previous to her at once undertaking the situation. Wishing to say something kind at parting, Mrs. H. observed, "I am sorry to see by your black dress that you have been in trouble lately." "Oh no, mum, thank you, not at all," replied the young woman; "it's only for my late missus. I have been particular fortunate in service, mum. My three last missuses have all died while I was with them; so I got mourning given me every time." Mrs. Housewife confessed she did not engage this young person, for fear she should be "particular fortunate" a fourth time.

A VISIT TO GRANDMA DURING VACATION.

Dissipated Boy: "Grandma, won't you let me go to the circus?"

Grandma: "No, my dear! It's a wicked place for you to want to go to; but if you are a good boy, I will take you to the cemetery, to visit grandpa's grave, and you may read me the verses on the tombstones."

A TEACHER said to a little girl at school: "If a naughty girl should hurt you, like a good girl you would forgive her, wouldn't you?" "Yes, mam," she replied, "if I couldn't catch her."

CHEERFUL VIEW OF THINGS.—"How dismal you look!" said a bucket to its companion, as they were going to the well. "Ah," replied the other, "I was reflecting on the uselessness of our being filled; for let us go away ever so full we always come back empty." "Dear me! how strange to look at it in that way!" said the other bucket. "Now, I enjoy the thought that however empty we come we always go away full. Only look at it in that light, and you'll be as cheerful as I am."

AN ADVERTISEMENT.—A grocer in Quebec advertises:—"The peculiar delicacies of the far-off Ind, and the finely-flavoured and humanizing leaf of the still farther Cathay; the more exciting, though not less delicious berry of Brazil, and the spices, sugars, and luscious fruits of the Antilles; the sugared condiments and the blood-enriching wines of the Mediterranean and the salt-cured and brain-renewing fish of our own stormy gulf." What he means to say is, that he sells tea, coffees, and codfish, cheap for cash.

WHAT TO LIKE BEST.

Belle: "Tell me, Mr. Jones, which do you like best at a party, the supper, or the dancing? Because I like the champagne best!"

Jones: "If you had asked me if I liked lovely women best, and the one I liked best, 'I could a tale unfold,' &c., &c. But then there's that idiot Johnson, watches you as if he had a claim upon you!"

[Aside: "I wish I knew which she liked best!"]

An old lady from the country elapt one night lately in the house of a friend in town. Her bed happened to be a plain hard mattress, so much recommended as more healthy to lie upon than a bed of down. Next morning the old lady was asked how she slept overnight. "No very well," was the reply, "for my auld bones are sair wi' that hard bed o' yours." "Oh, but Janet, do you not know that all the great physicians say that it is more healthy to sleep on beds as hard as a board?" replied the host. "Oh, ay," said Janet, "an I suppose that's what you took bodies ca' a Board o' Health."

AWFUL INFELICITY.

Frank: "I was sorry to hear that you had broken your arm. I suppose it pained you awfully, didn't it?"

Frank (with much feeling): "It wasn't the pain, old boy—oh no! It was being deprived of carrying my hands in my pocket, which broke me down."

Not long since, a German was riding along Sansome-street, near Sacramento, when he heard a pistol-shot behind him, and heard the whizzing of a ball near him, and felt his hat shake. He turned and saw a man with a revolver in his hand, and took off his hat and found a fresh bullet-hole in it. "Did you shoot at me?" asked the German. "Yes," replied the other party, "that's my horse; it was stolen from me recently." "You must be mistaken," said the German; "I have owned the horse for three years." "Well," said the other, "when I come to look at him I believe I am mistaken. Excuse me, sir; won't you take a drink?"

CONUNDRUM.—Q. It is made with a train, it travels with a train, it is of no use to a train, but a train cannot travel without it.—A. A noise.—Punch.

OYSTERS, SIR!—A great reduction in the price of natives may be hourly expected. According to *Land and Water* there is an "Oyster Bed at—" of all places in the world—"the Pyramids," probably in

the Pool generally found with them. Hopes are entertained that this now somewhat rare shell-fish will next be discovered nearer home—in the Staffordshire Potteries, or on the Mendip Hills.—Punch.

MANNERS!

Young Mistress: "Jane, I'm surprised that none of you stood up when I went into the kitchen just now!"

Jane: "Indeed, mum! which we was un'prised ourselves at your a comin' into the kitchen while we was a 'avin' our luncheon!"—Punch.

TO RUIN THE COMPLEXION.

Jenkins: "I am sorry to say, my leddy, I'm obliged to give warning."

My Lady: "Why, Jenkins?"

Jenkins: "Why, your leddyship insists on my wearing powder—and I find that powder is ruining my complexion."

My Lady: "It don't ruin mine—but you can go."—Punch.

THE PRIME PREMIER.

'Tis thought, by them that sets their mind

On lofty state and station,

That fine amusement they would find

In ruin of the nation.

But I take it that what wif' work, worry, and fuss,

No slavery's moor severe;

And there's nobody I oddn't like to be wuss

Than the Prime Premier.

Start young in Parliament a must

In trade as politician,

And all his youth fret out there, fust,

His gizzard with ambition.

By the time that he gets to the top o' the tree,

To an end his lease med be near—

A poor farmer I'd sooner a precious deal be

Than a Prime Premier.

But what to me most strange appears

Is, whether Whig or Tory,

He mostly reaps but scoffs and sneers,

Instead o' praise and glory.

Partly nigh all the papers and slushy reviews

Pursues un wi' gibe and wif' jeer;

So I'd fur rather wear hobnailed boots than the shoes

Of a Prime Premier.

When, arter all your pains and care,

You finds yourself in clover,

You don't bide hardly no time there

Afore they votes you over.

To be badgered and bullied and kicked o' one side,

Arter labourun year by year;

Why, what honest man 'ood, wi' a mossel o' pride,

Be a Prime Premier?

Be a Prime Premier?—Punch.

LATEST FROM THE ARABIAN EXPEDITION.—

Under the influence of the "almighty dollar" the natives are beginning to comprehend that our acquaintance is worth cultivating. It's astonishing how much light a little "chink" will throw over a subject.—*Fun*.

NOT OVER-EAGER.

Mr. Twentytwin: "John, do you know whether there's a ditch on the other side?"

John: "No, there ain't, sir!"

Mr. T.: "Ah! then just pull down the hedge!"—*Fun*.

FISH OF THE AMAZON.—Professor Agassiz, who

was engaged in examining the fish of the Amazon, stated as an example of the teeming varieties of that river, that, in a pool of only a few hundred square yards, he found 200 different kinds of fish, which is as many as the entire Mississippi can boast.

LONDON FIREMEN AND THE GOVERNMENT GRANT.

Can it be true that in Paris there are 12,000 men employed to do the work which in London is done by 314 firemen? However this may be, it is very certain that the latter number is not nearly large enough, and must be increased, as the men complain of undue fatigue, and are the last who should suffer from want of consideration at the hands of society. A wise proposal is made for the increase of the Government grant, and so long as the fire insurance duty remains, this seems a reasonable demand. Government now gives 10,000*l.* 15,000*l.* would be reasonable, and great good could be done with the difference in taking on more men, which would afford openings for the poor, and rendering the service a better safeguard to the public.

BEEHIVE SUGAR.—There are sixty-three manufactorys of sugar in Lithuania, Podolia, and a part of Bessarabia, of which half are also refiners. The smallest use from two to four presses, the largest twenty-two. 3,200,000 hectolitres of beetroots are bought for the manufactorys. The largest manufactory belongs to a company of shareholders, who buy the beetroots of the neighbouring proprietors, and

beetroot generally realize 3fr. 50c. the korse, a measure equivalent to 1 hectolitre 28. Nearly 9,000 workmen are employed, whose wages amount to about 16 millions of francs. Almost all the sugar not consumed in the country is sold to Russia. There are 1428 distilleries, in which a large number of workmen are employed, and their manufacture represents the value of 80 millions of francs. This industry has developed considerably. In the provinces, where the soil was suitable for the cultivation of potatoes, the proprietors drew from that source almost all their revenue. But since the increase of the tax on the manufacture of spirits many manufactories have been compelled to close. The manufacture of alcohol from beetroot is not practised in Poland.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

TEST FOR THE PRESENCE OF A FREE ACID.—Dissolve chloride of silver in just sufficient ammonia to make a clear solution. If a little of the test be added to ordinary spring water, the carbonic acid present in the latter will neutralize the ammonia and precipitate the chloride. The above forms a good lecture experiment, the test being a very delicate one.

CLEANING GOLD LACE ON A TUNIC.—Dry magnesia will remove tarnish from lace, silver lace, and braid on a scarlet jacket, which will look like new; and no doubt it will clean gold as well. It does not soil or injure the cloth in the least, but brushes off with perfect ease. A small quantity should be applied with a soft new toothbrush, brushing until the tarnish disappears.

POWDER FOR CLEANING JEWELLERY.—The high price of an excellent powder much used by European jewellers in finishing and polishing gold, induced Dr. W. Hoffman to analyse it. He found it consisted of 70 per cent. of oxide of iron and 30 per cent. of chloride of ammonium (sal ammoniac). It is made by subjecting iron to the action of hydrochloric acid.

RHUBARB FOR MEDICINE.—The common garden varieties do not yield the root known as Turkey rhubarb, and used in medicine. The following extract is from Hogg's "Vegetable Kingdom": "It is generally believed that *R. palmatum*, *undulatum*, *Rhepotion*, and *australe* are those from which the commercial supply is obtained. Rhubarb is produced abundantly in the elevated lands of Tartary, Chinese Tartary, Thibet, and Bhotan. It is not cultivated, but springs up spontaneously, wherever the seed has been distributed in places favourable for germination. The root is not considered fit for use till it is six years old, when it is dug up twice a year—in Tartary in spring and autumn, and in China only in winter. When it is taken up, the bark is removed, the root cut in pieces, with holes through them, and hung up to dry upon cords about the tents, or on the horns of sheep."

OYSTERS AT THE PYRAMIDS.

I ALWAYS supposed the Sphinx to be made of one solid block of granite, but I was grievously mistaken. It is simply shaped out from a mass of rock *in situ*, and two or three formations, speaking geologically, go to make up its substance. I do not pretend to any great knowledge of geology, but I believe I am correct in stating that its base, or body part, is nummulitic limestone, and its neck and head a rough kind of oyster-bed. What will my good friend Frank Buckland say when he hears that the great Sphinx is in part made up of fossil oysters? And, furthermore, what will he think, I wonder, when he peruses what I am now about to write for his especial delectation? But I must begin my story at the beginning.

I wandered away from my companions in company with two Arabs, in order to find such beetles and reptiles as might be hidden underneath the stones, scattered about upon the sandy plain intervening between the pyramids and one of the immense causeways made for rolling up the building materials when the pyramids were built. Overlooking this huge causeway is a kind of cliff of rock, from which workmen are at this time busily quarrying out stones for building purposes. Stone after stone was turned over by my Arabs, and under most of them I gleaned a rich harvest of beetles, &c. I found "Lord Scarabæus at home," and at once pounced upon him as my lawful prize.

In turning over the stones I came unexpectedly upon one that I fancied was made up in great measure of fossil oyster-shells; but being quite unprepared for such a discovery, and never for a moment dreaming that I should find fossil oysters scattered round the pyramids of Egypt, I really doubted the evidence of my own senses. I thought to myself, if I go and say to my friend, "Bauerman, I have found

oysters on the desert," and after all the shells should turn out to be those of some other mollusk, and not oysters at all, I shall for ever after be laughed at, and—may I say it, Mr. Editor?—"chaffed." I resorted to a slight, but I maintain, perfectly permissible deception. I, so to speak, decoyed my geological friend, under pretence of showing him something worth looking at, to the stone containing the oyster treasure, and then to my extreme delight he said, "Why, that stone is full of oysters!" or words to that effect. I could have danced round the stone from sheer joy, but I did not, and instead we climbed up the face of the cliff, to find out from whence the stone upon the plain had fallen.

It was easily found; overlying the nummulite limestone is a vast oyster-bed, and in it I found oysters of all ages and sizes, from the tiny spat, I should say not a year old, to the full-grown mollusk, which measures full five inches from the hinge to the edge or lip of the shell. The little oysters were sticking to stones, to older oysters, and often in great clumps or bunches to one another. If we could only propagate oysters now, as oysters evidently multiplied and spat in the Miocene Sea, in which sea these which are now fossils at the pyramids lived and flourished in pre-historic times, natives would soon come down in price, and we should be able to purchase a dozen for the price we now have to pay for a single oyster.—J. K. LOED.

WHILE THE BLOSSOM'S ON THE BROOM.

NEAR the window's deep embrasure,

Quiet-voiced, they bade adieu,

And a breeze from skies of azure

Caught this whisper as it flew:—

"Promise, sweetheart, ere we sever,

Till we meet within this room,

You will love me, Maud, whenever

There is blossom on the broom!"

'Neath her tears she smiled upbraiding,

Like a sun-blush through a shower,—

"Light that love is, which falls fading

With the blossom of a flower;

O'er the purple heath 'tis glowing

In bright knots of golden bloom,

So I'll love you at your going,

For the flower is on the broom!"

Summer came, and found it springing

On the dale, and mountain ledge;

And the reapers blithely singing,

Saw it gleaming in the hedge:—

"As she plied her 'broodery lonely

In the autumn's deepening gloom,

"Soon love fades," she sighed, "if only

It can blossom with the broom!"

Winter's bleak wind shakes the casement,

And the frost is on the pane,

And beside the turret basement

Chafes a palfrey at its rein;

While before the embers glowing

Happy laughter fills the room,

As she says, "I pledged, unknowing

There's aye blossom on the broom!"

JOHN JAMES LONSDALE.

STATISTICS.

COLONIAL WOOL.—The following is a statement of the imports of colonial wool into Great Britain during 1867, compared with those of the previous year:—New South Wales and Queensland, 1867, 101,635; 1866, 82,184; South Australia, 1867, 44,961; 1866, 40,510; Victoria, 1867, 170,444; 1866, 141,931; Western Australia, 1867, 3,596; 1866, 3,565; Tasmania, 1867, 15,943; 1866, 16,422; New Zealand, 1867, 76,729; 1866, 64,243; Cape of Good Hope, 1867, 128,287; 1866, 106,794; total, 1867, 541,655; 1866, 456,649; showing an increase of 86,006 bales, of about 400 lbs. each, over the imports of last year.

SWISS COMMERCE IN 1867.—The exports and imports in Switzerland during the year 1867 were as follows:—Imports.—Cattle (small), such as sheep, &c., 123,078; cattle (large), 48,863; coal and turf, 338,878 tons; raw cotton, 338,987 quintals; cotton yarn, 12,776 quintals; cotton fabrics, 39,306 quintals; grain, 3,683,378 quintals; flour, 302,048 quintals; rice, 91,150 quintals; coffee, 161,247 quintals; sugar, 236,905 quintals; wine in barrel, 798,682 quintals; metals (excepting iron), 41,918 quintals; iron (manufactured), 270,469 quintals; iron (raw), 269,192 quintals; machinery, 68,267 quintals; silk (raw), 21,371 quintals; silk goods, 1,612 quintals; soap, 29,306 quintals; wool (raw), 10,970 quintals; woollen fabrics, 39,593 quintals; tobacco (in leaf), 82,978 quintals; tobacco (manufactured), 17,644 quintals. Exports.—Cattle (small), 54,309; cattle (large), 66,109; grain, 86,078 quintals; flour, 46,609 quintals; butter, 10,309 quintals; cheese, 396,774 quintals; dried fruits,

5,025 quintals; wine, 4,774 quintals; vermouth, 3,754 quintals; hides and leather, 63,283 quintals; articles in wood, 15,602 quintals; raw iron, 24,741 quintals; manufactured iron, 26,725 quintals; machinery, 68,879 quintals; cotton yarn, 67,911 quintals; cotton fabrics, 209,919 quintals; silk fabrics, 32,751 quintals; articles in straw, 7,917 quintals; clocks and watches, 3,837 quintals; tobacco (manufactured), 6,705 quintals; woollen goods, 2,965 quintals. The following was the weight of cattle of all kinds passing through Switzerland during the year—108,744 quintals, and 1,427,705 quintals of goods of all kinds.

FRENCH LAW.

ABOUT a fortnight since a remarkable action was brought before the Tribunal of Commerce in Paris. Mr. Samuel Laing, M.P., and two or three other English capitalists, together with M. Erlanger, the banker of Paris, represented that they had commissioned a M. Merton, who is well known on the Paris Bourse, to obtain for them the operation of converting the Ottoman debt, and to effect for them certain financial combinations; and that they had confided to him a large sum of money—22,000,000fr. it was said—for the purpose of securing the co-operation in their objects of certain influential personages in the Turkish Government. It had been arranged, says the *Law Times*, that M. Merton was to dispose of this money according to his discretion, and that he was not to render any account of it. But circumstances occurred which rendered his employers desirous of obtaining an account of it, and they prayed the tribunal to order M. Merton to produce one. M. Merton replied that the terms of the agreement between him and his employers was such as to preclude the action from being maintained. The tribunal held that what M. Merton's employers had done was "contrary to morality and public order," and that an agreement "which had for its foundation the accomplishment of an illicit act was null in itself," and could not be maintained in a court of law. The action was consequently dismissed with costs.

MISCELLANEOUS.

LORD HOTHAM and Sir William Verner, Bart., are the only Members of the House of Commons now living who were under fire at Waterloo.

The death of the Rev. John Healey Bromby, M.A., the oldest clergyman in the Church of England, is announced. He was ordained deacon in 1793.

An enterprising Parisian shopkeeper on the first day of spring offered a bunch of violets to every lady who honoured his establishment with a visit.

Six months ago a cargo of 500 hoop skirts were sent out to Japan on a venture. The Japanese put paper covers on them, and used them for umbrellas.

UNDER a law just made public, the gambling-houses at Wiesbaden, Hamburg, and Ems, are to be closed by the 31st of December, 1872, at the latest.

THERE is at the present time in the vaults of the Banque de France, in Paris, the enormous sum of 1,160,611,605 francs 63 centimes in money and ingots.

ABRAHAM and SIMON OPPENHEIM, the well-known bankers of Cologne, have received patents of nobility from the King of Prussia. We believe it is the first instance of a Jew being ennobled in Prussia.

WE understand that Aldershot is to be lighted immediately with the lime light; and that the Government contractor has left Perth for the purpose of fitting up the necessary gasometers, &c., at the camp.

SIXTY thousand sheep per week are being boiled down in the two colonies of Victoria and South Australia. The average net proceeds of this method of disposing of sheep does not exceed 3s. 6d. or 4s. per sheep.

THE railways of France during the past seven years, have killed 297 persons. The companies, in their own defence, assert that of this number 169 perished through their own imprudence. During the same space of time, 4,516 travellers were seriously injured; forty-seven by their own fault. In the year 1866, of nearly 230,000,000 passengers, thirty-one were killed, and 540 injured.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT EXHIBITION, SOUTH KENSINGTON.—The arrangement of the third and final collection for the National Portrait Exhibition is now making good progress at South Kensington. The exhibition will consist of portraits of eminent persons who have lived during the present century, and of many distinguished people who flourished prior to that time, forming a supplement to the whole series. In all there will be about 900 portraits; and efforts are being made to open the exhibition, which promises to be of greater popular interest than its predecessors.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T. W.—We answered you in a recent number.

F. W. BUEBLEM.—You are eligible, providing you can obtain the nomination.

W. A. C.—1. You can sue in the county court. 2. We do not know the wages of a journeyman miller.

G. G.—Isinglass-stone is a pure fossil, clearer and more transparent than glass; of this material the ancients made their windows.

BENEDICT.—The celebrated essayist, Charles Lamb, was born in 1774, and died in 1834; his life was written in 1850 by Sir Thomas Noon Talford.

R. BAYNE.—To keep the hair curly, use neither oil nor pomatum, but a weak solution of isinglass; this will have no effect, without being injurious.

ALICE VERNON.—If your "troublesome lover" still persecutes you, why not ask the assistance of your father or brother, or joining either or both, a male friend?

A. W.—Sir Charles James Napier, the renowned general, and conqueror of Scinde, was born in 1782, and died in 1853; his life was written by Sir W. F. P. Napier.

R. S.—Spots or stains on gilded frames may be removed by gently wiping them with cotton dipped in sweet oil; then take off the gilding, and denudes its brightness.

GULNARE.—Your handwriting is by no means bad, but if you think improvement necessary, your only course is to practise indefatigably, taking care to form each letter distinctly.

A POOR WIDOW.—Your landlord can legally detain; you might sue for damages in the county court; far better, however, for your own comfort to quit the tenement and avoid litigation.

ANTONIA.—1. For a definition of the word *Filix*, see our answer to C. L. in Number 257 of THE LONDON READER. 2. Handwriting very fair, but would be better if more care was taken.

WILLIAM J. E. C.—Mr. K.—C. M. R.—1. "The Perils of a Photographer" is declined with thanks. 2. We must once more refer these correspondents to the notice at the end of the last column of this page.

THE LILY OF MINSTER.—It is the privilege of Queens regnant alone to be the first to declare their love; be patient, forget not maidenly modesty, and doubtless in good time the young man will make the desired declaration, the sooner indeed by your reticence.

CECILE.—1. Order from any bookseller in your city Bell and Dady's edition of "Cary's Dante," the price is 2s. 6d. 2. The art of poetry is not to be taught; remember the old maxim—"poets are born not made." 3. Yes, a rhyming dictionary would be useful.

MAINT ROCHER.—To remedy the unpleasantness you speak of, we know of nothing better than frequent bathing, and proper attention to cleanliness in every way; should it arise from weakness of the system, tonic medicine must be taken.

LEONORA.—1. Should the gentleman address you inoffensively and with good reason, it would be a breach of etiquette on your part to refuse to reply. 2. We do not know the address of any person who professes to tell character by handwriting.

CELEST.—To remove the discolouration caused by scorching, slice two peeled onions and extract the juice by squeezing; and half an ounce of white soap, two ounces of fuller's earth, and half a pint of vinegar; boil well together, and when cool, spread it over the scorched cloth, and when dry, wash well.

MARGARET GRAME.—1. To remove pimples, bathe the face twice or thrice a day with a little camphor spirit. 2. The use of a small quantity of chloride of lime and warm water, will impart a delicate whiteness to the skin, but should only be used occasionally, and afterwards washed off with a little warm water, to remove the odour.

AN INVALID.—1. The following methods of making bread will be found highly beneficial to any one suffering from indigestion: 3 quarts of unboltheaded meal; 2 quarts of soft water, warm, but not hot; 1 gill of fresh yeast; 1 gill of molasses, or not, as may suit the taste; 1 teaspoonful of saleratus. 2. Handwriting good, but a little too formal.

C. P. A.—1. To make cyder, take red-streaked pippins, pearmaines, greenings, and golden pippins, when they are so ripe that they may be shaken from the tree easily; bruise them very small, and when reduced to a mash, put them into a hair bag, and squeeze them out by degrees; then put the liquor, strained through a fine hair sieve, into a cask; then mash the pulp with a little warm water, adding a fourth part, when pressed out, to the cyder; to make it work well, warm a little honey, three whites of eggs, and a small quantity of flour together; put this into a fine linen

rag, and let it hang down by a string to the middle of the cyder cask; then put in one pint of warm new ale yeast, and allow it to clear itself from dross five or six days, after which, draw it off from the lees into smaller casks or bottles; if bottled, the liquor must be left an inch below the cork, or the bottles may burst by the fermentation; should this danger exist, it may be known by the hissing of the air through the corks, when it will be necessary to open them, to let the fermenting air escape; never mix summer and winter fruit together. 2. Work into small crumbs three ounces of butter, with two pounds of flour; add three ounces of powdered sugar, and two ounces of spice, then knead into a stiff paste, with new milk, work into small loaves or cakes, and bake in a slow oven.

JESSIE.—1. Should the gentleman introduced offer to shake hands, it would be a breach of etiquette for the lady to refuse. 2. Handwriting very indifferent. You should take a few lessons from a good master. 3. We cannot give you "a cheap recipe to make you fair;" but why desire the change? Surely Jennie must know that the charms of a brunette are no less than those of a blonde.

AMY.—In dress, as in everything else, exaggeration is the one thing to be avoided; yet there are some who cannot be happy unless they are launching into some extreme. In the young this is unpardonable, because they always look best in the most simple and sensible attire. If it be easy for the young to dress well, because nothing comes amiss to them, it is difficult for their elders to do so, who will not accept the fact that they are no longer young.

LIZZIE LEIGH.—1. To remove warts, a plant belonging to the *Ranunculus acris*, or common crowfoot, is a certain remedy; on breaking the stalk of the plant in two, a drop of milky juice will be observed to hang on the upper part of the stem; if this be allowed to drop on a wart, so that it becomes well saturated with the juice, after three or four applications, the wart will die, and may be picked off with the fingers. 2. To take stains out of marble, apply a little lemon juice to it with a clean rag, and then wash with warm water.

IMPROVEMENT ON ABSORBING SOME FLOWERS.

My flowers, fresh from the darling dew,

And fresh from the sylvan shades,

What is so sweet to liken you to

As so many lovely maid!

Let me see! I will sort you—so!

The ruby reds from the pearls,

And set you up in a shining row,

Like so many dancing girls!

And you that so your heads upraise

From out your hood-like covers,

I will call the maids that are used to praise,

And send to having lovers,

And you that scarce uplift an eye,

And shrink almost into buds,

I will call you maidens, soft and shy,

That have always lived in the woods.

And you whose lithe and wreathing arms

So many a prickly froe,

In spite of your modest-seeming charms,

I will call you all coquettes!

But whether smooth-armed, whether rough,

Or pear-shaped, or red,

The plainest of you all is enough

To turn the wisest head!

A. C.

ETIT.—*L'Aiguille*, "the Needle," is a mountain of France, formerly considered as one of the seven wonders of Dauphiny. It rises to a height of 6,562 feet above the level of the sea, nearly four miles from the town of Corps, on the 1-ft. of the great road from Grenoble to Gap. Having been long supposed inaccessible, it has been called *Mons Inaccessus*; but on Charles VIII. undertaking his expedition to Naples, he passed Grenoble, and sent the captain of his *echelons* to endeavour to reach the summit, in which he succeeded, in 1492.

G. WILLIS.—Naturalization in law, is the act of investing an alien with the rights and privileges of a native-born citizen or subject; it is of two kinds, collective and personal; collective, when a country or state is incorporated in another country, by gift, cession, or conquest; personal, when the privileges of a subject or citizen are conferred upon an individual by the licence or letters patent of a sovereign, or are obtained by the individual himself under a general law, upon his complying with certain conditions prescribed by the law.

J. WALTON.—In fly-fishing keep as far from the water as possible, especially if fishing for trout; let only the flies touch the water, and keep moving them gently and slowly on the surface; when a fish rises, let not a moment elapse before you strike, and do it sharply; when there are two flies on the line, it should be thrown so that the bottom fly reaches the water first; the best time for angling with the fly is, when there is a gentle breeze upon the water; south and west winds are the best; when the water has been disturbed by heavy rains, and is just resuming its natural colour; or when the day is dull and cloudy. The best time is either morning or evening.

F. A.—Jet, like amber, is a substance concerning the origin of which more than one conjecture has been hazarded. Some writers confidently describe it as a species of coal, others as fossil wood, and one ascribes its origin to the action of petroleum. It is found in Saxony and in the Prussian amber mines, and in this country in the upper lias shale in the vicinity of Whitby, and has been worked there for many hundred years. The best is obtained from a lower bed of the upper lias formation, which is of an average thickness of about twenty feet, and is known as jet rock. "Soft jet," obtained from the upper bed of the lias, and from the sandstone above, it is an inferior kind. Both are found spread out between the laminations of the rock, in layers seldom more than 1 in. or 2 in. in thickness. Jet ornaments were made in England during the occupation of the Romans; and in mediæval times, when Whitby Abbey was a centre of religious life, jet rosaries and crosses were worn by the nuns. On the advent of Protestantism, however, at the commencement of the reign of Elizabeth, the manufacture ceased, and appears to have fallen into desuetude until the year 1850, when two working men commenced to make bead crosses and neckchains with jet and knives. A stranger who

visited Whitby noticed their rude attempts, and advised them to try and turn the material. They followed his advice with complete success, were joined speedily by several others, and since then the trade has steadily increased. The best ornaments are sent to London, the inferior ones being designed for the American market.

GEORGE.—Camel is a term applied to a machine used in Holland and Russia, for raising and carrying ships over any bars or banks that may obstruct the passage of a river. It was invented by Bakker, a burghmaster of Amsterdam, in the year 1688 or 1690. It is composed of two parts, the outside of which are perpendicular, and the inside concave, shaped so as to embrace the hull of a ship on both sides; each part has a small cabin, with sixteen pumps, ten plugs, and twenty men; they have on deck, also, a large number of horizontal windlasses, from which ropes are fastened round the ship's hull; when they are used, the plugs are opened, and the water admitted, until the camel sinks with the ship; all the ropes are then made loose, and the vessel is allowed to float between the two sides of the machine; on the ropes being tightened and the water pumped out, the camel rises, lifting the ship with it; both are then towed over the bar; this machine can raise a ship eleven feet, or, in other words, make her draw eleven feet less water.

HELLIE M., eighteen, fair, light curly hair, blue eyes, and very good looking. Respondent must be tall, dark, and good looking.

E. M. R., seventeen, dark hair, hazel eyes, and handsome. Respondent must be a respectable young man, and not more than twenty-one.

E. S., twenty-four, rather good looking, thoroughly domesticated, and has twenty pounds. Respondent must be a respectable young man.

SWEETHEART, eighteen, medium height, dark hair and eyes and a good figure. Respondent must be tall, dark, and with an income of 200l.; a foreigner preferred.

BELLA and LIZZIE. "Bella," 5 ft. 1 in., fair, and pretty. "Lizzie," 6 ft. 2 in., dark, and very pretty; both are thoroughly domesticated. Respondents must be dark; friends preferred.

EMILY H., seventeen, 5 ft. 6 in., brown hair and eyes, dark, and of a cheerful disposition. Respondent must be tall, dark, and good looking; a clerk preferred. (Handwriting pretty and ladylike.)

SARAH and CLARA. "Sarah," twenty-one, 4 ft. 8 in., fair and good tempered. "Clara," seventeen, 5 ft., fair, and light brown hair. Respondents must be good looking, and not more than thirty.

NELLY and ANNIE. "Nelly," twenty-three, 5 ft. 2 in., fair, hazel eyes, respectable, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, and good tempered. "Annie," twenty, rather tall, black hair and eyes, respectable, fond of home, and domesticated. Respondent must not be more than twenty-four, good tempered, and respectable.

LIZZIE and ANNIE. "Lizzie," nineteen, medium height, fair, light brown hair, fond of home, and of a cheerful temper. Respondent must be about twenty-five, tall, and dark; a tradesman preferred. "Annie," seventeen, medium height, black curly hair, dark eyes, clear complexion, fond of music, and of a loving and cheerful disposition. Respondent must be about twenty-one, tall, fair, fond of home, and have a moderate income. (Handwriting ladylike, and does not need improvement.)

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

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FRANK FAIRLEIGH by—"Lobelia," twenty-three, fair, good tempered, musical, well educated, and of good connections.

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J. M. by—"S. E. C.," nineteen, dark blue eyes, brown hair, and thoroughly domesticated; and—"H. L.," 5 ft. 4 in., fair, brown hair, blue eyes, and domesticated.

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LONDON: Printed and Published for the Proprietor, at 334 Strand, by J. WARREN.